

ISBN 0-688-13168-9

FPT \$16.00

THE LIVING END TOTALLY F***ED UP

Gregg Araki

THE LIVING END

the never-ending controversy



"vibrant, angry, it has power of honesty and originality."
—LINDA WERTHEIM,
The New York Times

"simply the best independent film to come along in years, exploding the notion of what gay film should be"
—AL WEISZL, *NYC*

"quintessentially a film of its time"
—B. RUBY RICH,
The Village Voice

"a lovers on the run movie with a radical, urgent twist"
—DAVID ANDREW, *Newsweek*

"a savagely funny, sexy and grieving cry from the heart"
—PETER TRAVERS,
Rolling Stone

"has the same impact as a good ACT UP slogan or a solid punk thrash, groovy."
—TONY HAYES, *Time Out*

"provocative, harrowing yet ironically exhilarating"
—KEVIN THOMAS,
Los Angeles Times



"a milieu of misogyny. [I'd like to] take araki out to a deserted highway and chop his dick off."
—Pulitzer Prize nominee
DONNA MINKOWITZ, *The Advocate*

"so pretty, so doomed, so what"
—JEFFREY HILBERT,
Sassy Magazine

"the wonky camera angles, stilted acting and dialogue belong in a student workshop— it's faddish to the point of distraction."
—DENIS SAGUIN,
Eye Magazine

"if attitude could pass for depth, *the living end* would be a wishing well where you listen hard for your pitched penny to hit bottom and never ever hear a thing."
—DAVID ARMSTRONG,
San Francisco Examiner

"I've never seen *pierrot le fou* or any other godard movie for that matter, but if they're anything like *the living end*, I don't want to see them."
—Variety critic AAV DAWES
on the Sundance Festival bus in Park City

"pretty boys with guns in their mouths"
—disgruntled PC lesbian in the lobby of the Castro Theater, San Francisco

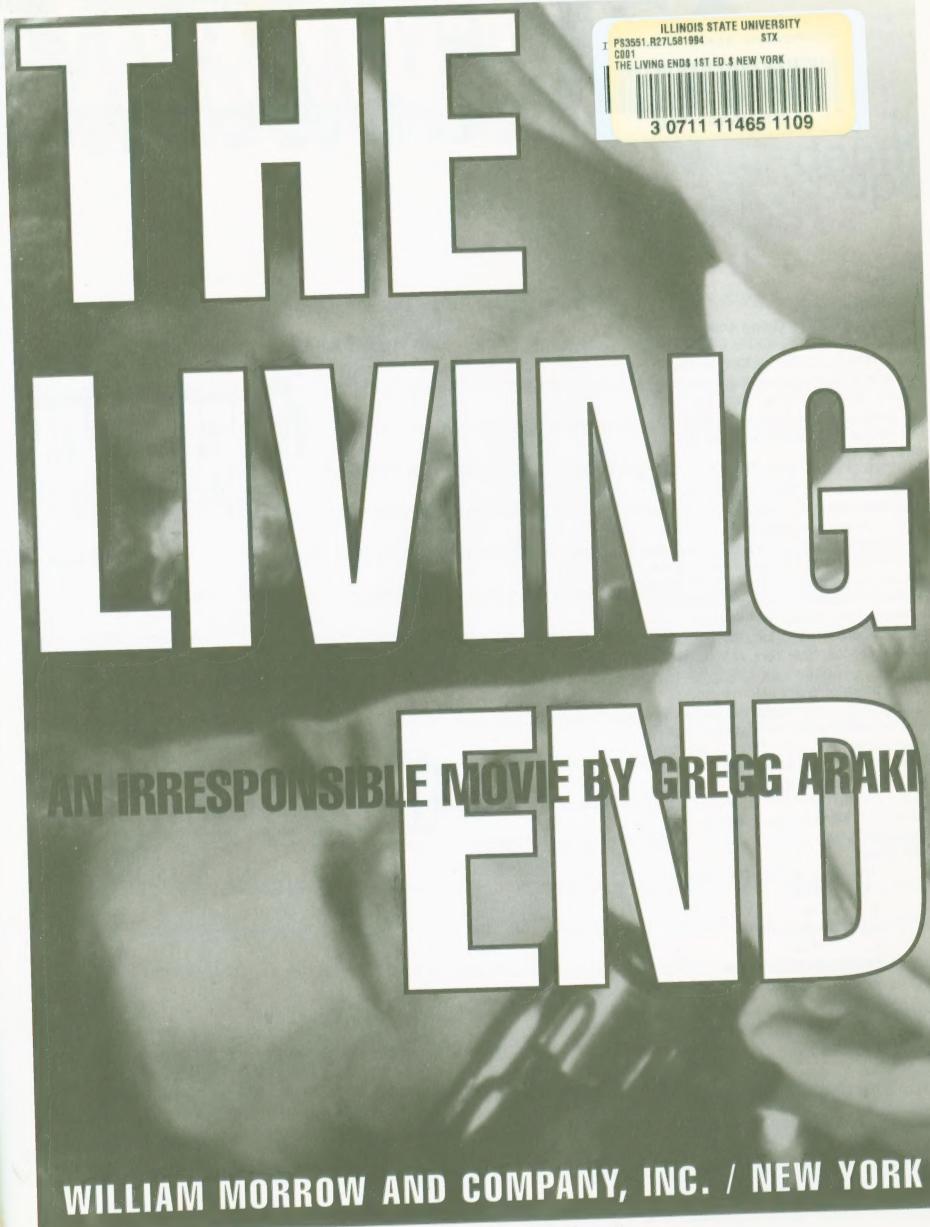
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contents foreword

by
dennis
cooper

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Special thanks to: Dennis Cooper, Rick Linklater, Eric Nakamura, Ray Holmes, Andrea, Stephen Pevner, Zach Schisgal, Will & all at Morrow, Paul West at *spunk*, Ted Young-ing at *spunk*, and last but not least, my dyke.

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA.

Araki, Gregg.

The living end/ totally f***ed Up / Gregg Araki
p. cm.
ISBN 0-688-13168-9
I. Title
PS3551.R27L58 1994
791.43'72—dc20

93-33358

CIP

Printed in the United States of America

First Edition

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BOOK DESIGN BY PAUL WEST, SPUNK, INC.

foreword

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the screenplay

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Having grown up in the Los Angeles subculture described by Gregg Araki's films, maybe I can sort of help authenticate their weird emotional tone and narrative drift, not that the work needs authenticating. But what with this "Queer Film" tag confusing the air around things queer, I wonder if Araki's work is being seen distinctly. To my mind—and despite what many critics seem to be saying—it's not about his or anyone's identity—sexual, ethnic, or otherwise. If anything, it's about being smart, aesthetic, driven, lonely, and occasionally derailed by romantic notions of interpersonal love that you know are absurd even as you veer obsessively toward some fascinating stranger. That Araki's Asian American and queer is beside the point, though it's nice that both aspects are generating interest in his oeuvre at the moment, if that's what it takes. But he'll be making his shit long after "Queer Film," "Modern Primitivism," "New Age," etc. are just jokey reference points in some future documentary about the hazy, crazy late twentieth century. "Queer" is a useful way to define yourself, sure, just as long as it gives you a thrill, or it intimidates people in power, or it provides you and your friends with power, but otherwise . . . who cares? Why let power mongers fence us into this narrow, predetermined identity just so they can praise us and/or our art in a qualified way, like, say in Araki's case, he's one of the more curious talents in his little genre, as if he worked for a travel bureau or something. Like . . . "Here's a teensy-weensy grant for your troubles," or "Here, have a positive if condescending review. And sorry about AIDS," or whatever. Point is, are we so lazy or scared that we'll not only let ourselves be bunched together behind the minority art banner, we'll let this construction design our art-making practices, even if these compromises turn our work, no matter how radical, into minor tempests in a societal teapot? Fuck that. One of the great things about Gregg Araki's films is how they fight this convention to their core. Aesthetically singular and concerned with issues of concern to a lot of folks at the moment, the films are nonetheless even sort of anti-trendy in some weird way. Still, I suspect they may wind up inspiring a trend or two among even younger filmmakers, if they haven't already.



THE LIVING END

OPENING CREDITS materialize, scrawled over black.

The ultra-abrasive TITLE SONG creeps to a barely audible, filtered-through-headphones level.

More OS sounds.

The unnerving RATTLE of an aerosol can being shaken, the HISS of paint being sprayed.

MUSIC EXPLODES TO FULL-BLAST, HEAD-PULVERIZING, SUBJECTIVE LEVEL

cut to

ext—THE WINDSWEPT OUTSKIRTS OF THE LOST METROPOLIS—day

In fresh, still-dripping letters, graffiti on a bombed-out wall proudly proclaims

FUCK THE WORLD.

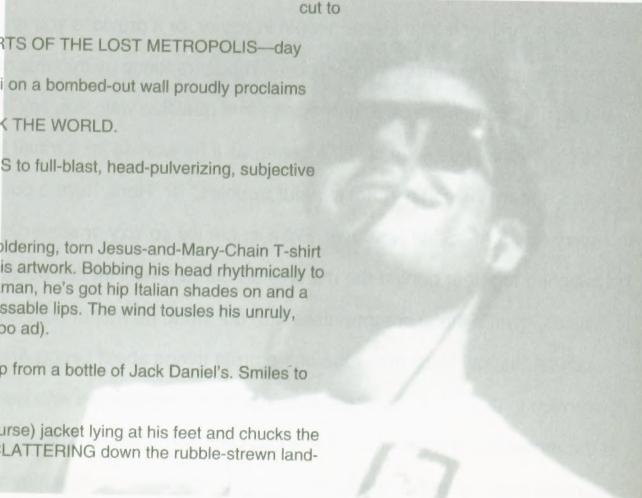
(On the cut, the MUSIC EXPLODES to full-blast, head-pulverizing, subjective level)

LUKE WAYNE

(young, dark, electric-sexy in a smoldering, torn Jesus-and-Mary-Chain T-shirt sort of way) steps back to admire his artwork. Bobbing his head rhythmically to the music emanating from his Walkman, he's got hip Italian shades on and a cigarette (unlit) dangling from his kissable lips. The wind tussles his unruly, postpunkish hair (like some shampoo ad).

Luke takes a stomach-churning gulp from a bottle of Jack Daniel's. Smiles to himself. Almost a smirk.

He picks up his black leather (of course) jacket lying at his feet and chuck the empty spray can away, sending it CLATTERING down the rubble-strewn landscape.



SERIES OF SHOTS MACRO CLOSE-UPS

All so tight, they're deconstructed, pure compositions of line, shape, form. Perfectly still, looking strange, alien, foreboding almost in an abstract void.

A headlight.

Door handle.

A Gumby and a plastic skeleton hanging from the mirror. Fingers nervously toying with a bundle of keys in the ignition.

An extreme, claustrophobic CLOSE-UP of a wary, anxious liquid eye in the rearview mirror. Staring. Blinks. More staring . . . The eye closes. As it opens again, we see the full face of

JON SKYWALKER (lean, fair-haired, more beautiful than handsome) gazing at the reflection of his own eyeball over the top of his dark Ray-Bans. He sits there, unmoving, like he's concentrating on each and every inhale and exhale, making sure he's still alive.

Finally, Jon turns the ignition key and the engine blazes to life with a startlingly loud ROAR. Hard-edged POSTMODERN-INDUSTRIAL MUSIC starts playing over the stereo.

JON v.o.

clearing his throat before he begins

Random notes about cars and driving in LA. One time on the 101 near the 405 interchange, I saw this guy in a green VW bug arguing with a redneck in one of those big, hungin' 4-wheel-drive trucks . . .

The battered, metallic blue Subaru coupe pulls away from the curb.

cut to



SERIES OF SHOTS

DRIVING POVs—day

MUSIC continues over various extraterrestrial landmarks viewed from the archetypal LA POV (behind the wheel of a car). All thoroughfares clogging with omnipresent traffic.

JON v.o. cont

They were all weaving in and out of traffic, flipping each other off, yelling out their windows. Then out of the blue, the guy in the truck just ran the VW off the road, sent him smashing into the divider. It was like fuckin' *Road Warrior* . . .

The Huge RKO-esque radio tower on Fairfax near the 10 freeway.

The looming mausoleumlike car wash on La Brea.

JON v.o. cont

... Then there was the Valley Girl in the BMW convertible. Zigzagging through traffic like some rock video, bopping her blond airhead to Depeche Mode or something. Splat. She hits this old Japanese guy hobbling across the street with his groceries. Blood, guts, Geritol flying everywhere ...

Desperate "Have You Seen Me?" graffiti at Santa Monica and Highland.

The immense floating light bulb on Pico.

JON v.o. cont

... Last week, at the corner of Olympic and Avenue of the Stars in Century City, I happened to look over at the driver of the car next to me. This woman, about forty, was just sobbing uncontrollably, her makeup all dripping off her face ...

Earl Scheib's globe in the middle of Beverly Hills.

Construction/destruction everywhere.

JON v.o. cont

... This friend of mine the other day had this to say about living in LA: "If you don't have a car, you might as well commit suicide right now and get it over with."

DRIVING POV

Runs smack into the cholesterol of traffic, noise, smog blocking the Endless Road Ahead. The Modern World. Welcome to Dante's Carbon Monoxide Inferno.

INSIDE HIS CAR/WOMB

Jon, on automatic pilot, stares somnambulistically into commuter hell from behind his dark glasses. He turns up the pounding MUSIC on his car stereo.

JON v.o.

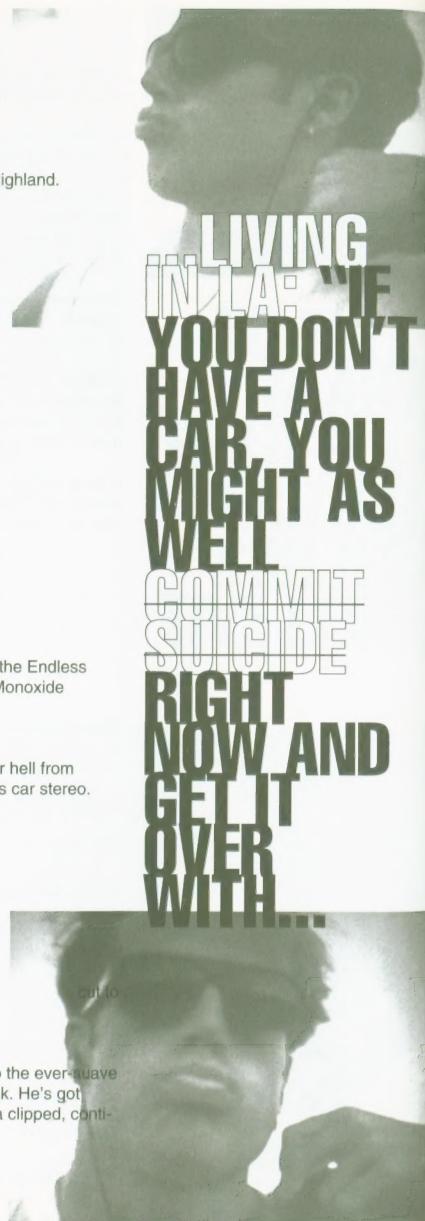
Journal entry, November 13th. A day like any other. The first day of the rest of my life. Shit. Shaved. Showered. Had this grody burrito for breakfast. Stopped off at Aron's and bought the new Dead Can Dance CD. Got the results of my first AIDS test.

int—CLINIC OFFICE

A hyperactive DOCTOR (who bears an amazing resemblance to the ever-guave matinee idol MARK FINCH), chain-smoking behind a messy desk. He's got thick horn-rimmed glasses on and speaks a-mile-a-minute with a clipped, continental accent.

DOCTOR coughs

Positive. Sorry.



grinds out his cigarette in an overflowing ashtray
As the doctor chatters incessantly on about facts and statistics, Jon just sits there, totally devoid of emotion.

int—HOSPITAL BATHROOM

MOS, Jon on his knees on the sanitized floor, puking into the institutionalized toilet.

DOCTOR o.s.

... And no doubt you've heard of "safe sex," which as a member of a high-risk group you ought to be practicing anyway ...

cut to

back to



POSITIVE.

SORRY.



int—CAR

Jon sits stone-faced in the intolerable sardine can of traffic.

JON v.o.

... And now I just have no idea what the fuck I'm going to do.

He stares blankly into the future.
Cuts off the main road, escaping from the hopeless snarl of cars.

cut to

ext—OUT ON THE ROAD—day

Luke stands, the iconographic hitchhiker, a lonesome speck under the indifferent horizon. The unlit cigarette still dangling, his battered backpack slung over his shoulder.

He strips his shirt off. A shiny silver crucifix decorates his chest.

int—CAR

Finally free of traffic, Jon speeds, MUSIC BLASTING.

Oblivious, he passes Luke by. A blur.

BACK OUTSIDE

Tucking his shirt into the waistband of his jeans, Luke watches after the speeding receding car. Gives it the finger. Takes another hit of JD.

Continues waiting.

A beat. Two.

Then a RED CONVERTIBLE (strongly resembling the one Brigitte Bardot was killed in in *Contempt*) pulls up. Stops.

A PAIR OF DYKES (who look uncannily like KAREN FINLEY and JOHANNA WENT), both wearing Lina Wertmuller-ish sunglasses, give Luke the once-over.

KAREN
Hey there, hunk-a-saurus. Need a lift?

Luke beams, his perfect white teeth gleaming.

teetering

DRIVING POV—day

Cruising along the dizzying expanse of PCH, teetering vertiginously on the edge of oblivion. MUSIC soaring.

JON v.o.
"Live fast, die young, leave a beautiful corpse."
beat
Yeah, right.

Jon's speaking into a microcassette recorder as he drives.

JON
into recorder
Death is weird.

He mulls that brilliant gem over a moment. Keeps driving . . .

vertiginously

on

the

edge

cut to

cut to

of

oblivion

ext—THE ENORMOUS PARKING LOT AT THE EDGE OF THE SEA—day

Completely deserted except for the tiny, lonely dot of Jon's car.

He slams the door shut. Walks toward the big churning ocean, into the howling wind.

Sitting on the sand, he looks out over the rim of the planet, waiting for the Big Quake to hit, the A-Bomb to drop, the World to just End in one big cathartic bang. But, of course, nothing happens—except maybe a seagull or two flying by.

He's totally bummed.

int—RED CONVERTIBLE

Blasting along the Open Highway. Strange sixties Nino Rota-ish MUSIC percolates over the stereo in the BG.

Luke is squashed into the back, Johanna and Karen talk it up in the front.

JOHANNA
S'where ya headed, you sexy slab of buff beefcake?

LUKE
shrugs, the wind casually tossing his hair
Wherever.

KAREN
Oh my. A nomadic drifter. A lonesome cowboy.

Schl^{long},
Dong,
Dingus,
Dick,
Prick,
Prod,
Peter,
Pecker,
Poker,
Penis,
Whant,
Org^{an},
Lovegun...



Hitchhiking across the country like Jack Kerouac. HOW ROMANTIC.
to Johanna
Isn't that ROMANTIC, Johanna?

JOHANNA
I'll say! It just makes me WET.

KAREN
It makes me more than WET. It makes me HOT. HOT and JUICY!

The women start tongue-wrestling in the front seat.

Luke, starting to get a little unsettled by the strangeness of his travel companions (and by their tendency to shriek when they talk), looks out and sees . . .

HIS POV
A SPLIT-SECOND FLASHBY
Jon's car zipping past once again in the opposite direction.

KAREN
suddenly turning around, no longer even paying attention to the road
HEY!

Luke has this uneasy look on his face like "Who, me?"

KAREN
Yeah. YOU. How BIG is your COCK?

LUKE
practically swallowing his Adam's apple
... excuse me?

KAREN
You heard me, studmuffin. HOW BIG IS YOUR COCK?

JOHANNA
You know, your Schl^{long}, Dong, Dingus, Dick, Prick, Prod, Peter, Pecker, Poker, Penis, Whang, Organ, Lovegun . . .

KAREN
. . . Skin Flute, Beef Stick, Tool, Sausage, Wiener, Hotrod, Pistol, Pussy Plunger . . .

LUKE
starting to get genuinely scared
... uh . . .

KAREN
WHAT? WHAT'S THAT? WE CAN'T HEAR YOU . . .

LUKE
his throat now as dry as Kirin beer
...

Johanna suddenly pulls out a BIG GUN and shoves it into Luke's face.

JOHANNA
Speak up! Speak up, motherfuckwad, before I
BLOW YOUR PRETTY FACE TO
SMITHEREENS!!!

Luke can just barely manage to gulp.

ext—THE WOODS—afternoon

Luke is tied up with stretched ladies lingerie, naked in the grass, as Karen and Johanna dance around him as if performing some bizarre tribal rites. They're chanting/shrieking as they flagellate him with huge, FLUORESCENT FOAM-RUBBER DILDOS, clearly getting off on humiliating and degrading him.

KAREN AND JOHANNA
Men are evil. Men are evil. Men are evil.
E-vil. E-vil. E-VIL. EEEEE-VIL.

Luke is freaked. He feels like he's trapped in some bad acid trip.

Johanna pulls a HUGE PAIR OF GARDENING SHEARS out of a Bloomingdale's bag.

JOHANNA
snapping the blades open and shut for emphasis
Castrate them. Castrate them. Cas-trate.
CAS-TRATE.

Luke's now rightfully downright terrified. He frantically struggles to get out of the bra straps binding his wrists.

KAREN
Chop it off. Chop it off. CHOP IT OFF.

She pulls a PAINTBRUSH and a CAN OF SHELLAC out of the bag.

KAREN
Let's make a dildo. Let's make a dildo. LET'S
MAKE A DILDO.

Johanna and her shears are getting closer and closer. SNAP. SNAP. SNAP...

At the last possible moment, Luke wriggles free and goes scrambling for the gun, which lies on the ground nearby.

LUKE
holding both the women at bay
Drop the scissors, bitch.

JOHANNA
complying, pissed off
Oh shit.

Holding the wacked-out lesbians at gunpoint, he collects his clothes scattered

cut to

CHOP

IT

OFF

all over the ground, gets the car keys from Karen.

LUKE
Thanks.

He runs off, leaving the unhappy pair behind in the woods.

LUKE
Fuckin' weirdos.

cut to

TV
The FIVE O'CLOCK NEWS. Some horrific disaster reproduced in living video color for the entertainment of the viewing audience.

cut to

int—ARTSY LOFTSPACE—afternoon

Jon's best friend DARCY (neo-beat chic, in her twenties) is clinging to Jon, who just stands there, statuelike, numb. Behind them, the TV continues, an agitating background annoyance. They embrace for a long time in the dwindling angular shadows of her airplane-hangar-sized studio, which reeks of "trendy art student."

JON
It's not like I'm kicking the bucket right this second, Darce.

He eases away.

DARCY
I can't believe it.

Jon shrugs, ironically feeling like he has to comfort her.

DARCY
I mean, you were careful, right?

JON
Yeah. Well, usually. Darce, you don't know what it's like having to be 100% safe 100% of the time . . .

DARCY
It was Craig, wasn't it?

Jon just shrugs.

DARCY
I never did trust that guy. Didn't I tell you his karma sucked?

JON
Darcy, I'm not blaming anyone except myself. But when I heard he was sick, I thought I'd better, y'know . . .

DARCY
Is he still in New York?

11

JON
shakes his head
Moved back to his parents' in Utah.

DARCY
Well, that's a fuckin' fate worse than death.

They laugh, easing the tension a little.

A TV commercial comes on in the BG. OB Tampons or some such thing.

Jon nods, not really wanting her to go on.

JON
Yeah.
trying to just change the subject
Really, Darcy, I think I'm gonna be fine. I'll just
have to lay off the Joy Division records for
awhile.

They both smile.

DARCY
relieved
You goon. God, if I don't smoke a cigarette in
about one second I'm going to *die*.

The two friends laugh.

cut to

(red convertible) DRIVING POV—dusk

Careening along Mulholland Drive.

The OS sound of rummaging through plastic cassette cases.

LUKE o.s.
Fuck. Don't those wenches listen to anything
but Michelle Shocked and k.d. lang?

He starts disgustedly flinging tapes out the window.

Then
BLAM! The tire blows out.

LUKE

Fuck.

He pulls over.

cut to

CLOSE-UP

The flat tire stopped at the gravelly side of the road.
Luke's army-booted foot kicks it savagely.

LUKE o.s.

12

Didn't
I
tell
you
his
karma
sucked?
now.

FuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuckFUCK.

He retrieves the gun and his backpack from the passenger seat, puts his shirt
back on and wanders off into the purple smog sunset.

cut to

int—APT—night

Blackness

The OS sound of keys in the lock.
Jon enters. Clicks on the light, revealing his messy, post-punk/boho digs.
Records. Posters. Dirty laundry. The usual miscellaneous shit.

Jon looks around at his home, his things. His bubble. And notices them for
perhaps the first time. Everything looks somehow different now. He steps on something, which SQUEAKS. He finds a SMALL RUBBER TOY IN THE SHAPE OF A HUMAN BUTT at his feet. He bends over, picks it up. It makes a pathetic SQUEAKING SOUND.

He studies it for a beat. Then squeezes it, making it squeak again.

cut to

int—LIVING ROOM—night

INSIDE A FISHBOWL
Jon's pet goldfish, CRAIG, swims around in his aquatic cell, full of piscine ennui.
Jon approaches, his face refracted, distorted in the curved glass.

JON

Hey there, Craig.

He pulls out the TetraFin and sprinkles some onto the surface of the water.
Watches Craig gobble up the floating fishflakes.

JON

It's the End of the World As We Know It . . .
and I feel shitty.

Craig ignores him, ravenously devouring his supper.

cut to

int—BATHROOM—later

Noisy nihilistic INDUSTRO-THRASH wafts in from the living room.

Jon is soaking in the white tub, wearing a Jean-Paul Belmondo-ish hat, getting
soused on generic beer (the shot looks like an outtake from *Pierrot Le Fou*).
He's on the phone, the cord dangling like a rubbery black spiderweb.

JON

No, I haven't stuck my head in the oven,
thanks.

intercut with

int—KITCHEN

13

Darcy in a paint-splattered smock, on the other end, chain-smoking. In the BG, her handsome, equally artsy b-friend PETER bangs pots and pans around, making dinner.

DARCY

Well, are you coming over or not? Peter's cooking, so it'll even be edible.

Jon, submerged to his Adam's apple, looks like he's on the verge of slipping underwater.

JON

I dunno, Darcé. I was kinda thinking of soaking here till I'm all gross and prunified, then settling in for the night with a good "art" video . . .

DARCY

Frat Boys in Bondage or Pork Me Till I Explode?

JON

A brand new one. *Big 'N' Beefy Butteaters*.

DARCY

Sounds better than what Peter rented.
to Peter, who's now sautéing onions
What'd you get again, babe?

PETER

looking up from his smoking pan
Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant. Hey, toss the salad, willya?

DARCY

Gott in Himmel, not again.
making one last pitch to Jon
So y'sure you don't want to come over?
Supper and weltschmerz . . . I can't say I blame you. Well, maybe lunch tomorrow? I'll call you after class. 'K . . . Guten abend, mein freund.

JON

by now immersed up to his chin and earlobes
'Night, Darcé.

He reaches over the rim of the tub and drops the phone, which lands back in its cradle with a plastic CLUNK.

Sits there soaking in the warm water and overpowering stillness for a pendulous moment . . .

Sighs

ext—THE GODFORSAKEN HIGHWAY—night

CLOSE-UP

Luke's hand scrawling with a Magic Marker on a road sign:

Where's the party animal?

cut to



CAMERA



SLOWLY



FETISHIZINGLY

I BLAME SOCIETY

He steps back to look at his latest "piece." He sure amuses himself.

Hitchhiking again, he carelessly sticks his thumb out. A lone, illuminated ghost in the darkness.

He finishes his carob trail mix dinner, tosses the wrinkled bag away. Replaces his unlit cigarette.

A CAR

(SUZUKI SAMURAI or reasonable facsimile) pauses . . . Idling, its exhaust forms clouds in the chilled air.

Luke gives a smile and goes trotting over.

THE DRIVER

A long-haired *This Is Spinal Tap* reject with an Andrew Dice Clay T-shirt on, leans over, rolls down the window.

DRIVER

checking Luke out like a cut of T-bone at Alpha Beta

Where's the party, animal?

Luke smiles slyly. Shrugs nonchalantly.

cut to

int—BLANK SUBURBAN HOUSE—night

Outside the closed bedroom door, a large rottweiler scratches, whines and barks, trying to get in.

int—BEDROOM

The OS DOG SOUNDS continue over

CLOSE-UP

Luke's totally expressionless face (unlit cigarette still in place). CAMERA TILTS SLOWLY, FETISHIZINGLY DOWN his bare muscular torso, past his crucifix, to a pair of ill-fitting tennis shorts hanging low around his waist.

A MATCHING CLOSE-UP

An ass in an identical pair of shorts. Luke's hands reach in and pull the shorts down, revealing a pair of white, rounded buttocks demarcated by a tan line that one might get on a tennis court. The curvaceous cheeks quiver with anticipation.

Luke wields a Yonex Special. He raises the racket into the air, SLAPS it down.

LUKE
ultra-deadpan

Fifteen love.

He raises the racket. It leaves behind an imprinted pattern of red crisscrosses on the fleshy ass. He SLAPS it down again.

LUKE

Thirty love.

He raises the racket again as the OS dog continues to bark.

cut to



int—BEDROOM—night

Wet and wearing nothing but his Belmondo hat, Jon lies on the bed, his trusty mini-recorder in hand. He rewinds a bit, playing back to where he left off.

JON v.o. on tape
... Death is weird.

He starts talking again into the machine like it's his analyst or something.

JON
November 13th, continued . . . Y'know, in a totally twisted way, I'm almost relieved. I mean, compared to the agony of *not* knowing the paranoid terror over every cold that lingers a little too long . . . The dread is almost worse than the disease. Operative word: "almost."

He stops. Clicks the recorder off. He doesn't feel a whole helluva lot better.

The OS phone on the bedside table RINGS.
His sanity momentarily saved, Jon rolls out of frame, picking up the receiver.

JON
reentering the frame
Lo?

HUSKY MALE VOICE v.o. over the phone
Are you ready to get off?

JON
What?

HUSKY MALE VOICE v.o.
Are you horny? D'you wanna get off?

JON
laughing
Who is this? Where'd you get this number?

HUSKY MALE VOICE v.o.
The bulletin board.

JON
incredulous
Y'mean, like one of those 976-things? . . .

HUSKY MALE VOICE v.o.
Uh-huh. So what do you look like?

JON
starting to blush
This must be some kind of joke, right, who is this really?

HUSKY MALE VOICE v.o.
Are you hard?

JON

What?

HUSKY MALE VOICE v.o.
What are you wearing?

Jon, crazily, is starting to get turned on, but the whole thing is so awkward and ridiculous . . .

JON

Look, I gotta go.

HUSKY MALE VOICE v.o.
How big is your cock?

JON
I really don't think that's any of your business.

HUSKY MALE VOICE v.o.
seductively
C'mon. Don't you wanna get off?

JON

Maybe some other time. Sorry.

Jon quickly hangs up. Smiling, feeling embarrassed, he shakes his bemused head.

He lies back on the bed. Feels the silence closing in on him—like if he doesn't get out of there in half a second, he's gonna lose his mind. He decides, moves.

cut to

int—SUBURBAN BEDROOM—night

Luke lies, absolutely dead to the world, snoring in postcoital harmony with his tennis partner, who's asleep beside him.

All is quiet, tranquil, still. Until

SUDDENLY
the bedroom door is flung open, light and the rottweiler come blasting in. And an eardrum-shattering VOICE starts SCREECHING.

VOICE o.s.
Oh. My. GOD.

Luke and the Tennis Buff are rudely awakened by a STATUESQUE WOMAN and the rottweiler towering over the bed. The Woman drops her luggage to the floor with a loud THUD.

LUKE and the man
groggy, simultaneously
Huh?????

WIFE
hands on her hips

My sentiments exactly.

MAN

Oh shit. Barbie, what are you doing here?
rubbing the sleep from his eyes
You weren't due back till Friday.

WIFE

on the verge of a nervous breakdown
My deal fell through. Ken, I thought we were
through with this little "phase."

MAN

I had a relapse. Sorry.

Luke starts gathering up his clothes. So much for a warm place to sleep for the night.

WIFE o.s.

That's just not gonna cut the mustard anymore,
darling.

MAN o.s.

sighs

I wish you'd calm down, lovebucket. Did you
take your lithium today?

WIFE o.s.

Don't fucking patronize me, Ken. I mean it this
time. It's not the seventies anymore, when
being married to a bisexual was fashionable.
Can't you see you're tearing me apart???

Yanking on his ripped jeans, Luke forages for his socks. Finds himself face to face with the growling rottweiler.

WIFE o.s.

I can't take this anymore, Ken. I JUST CAN'T
TAKE THIS ANYMORE ...

MAN o.s.

But sweetheart, dollface, cuddles . . . I love
you.

There is a sudden resounding silence. Luke looks up and sees the Woman has taken a LARGE KITCHEN KNIFE out of her purse . . .

The Woman lets out a gooseflesh-raising Cherokee battlecry of a SCREAM and plunges the knife toward the Man. We see Luke's horrified reaction as blood goes splattering all over him and the floor. The rottweiler scampers over to lick up the growing crimson pool.

LUKE

Ouch.

The Woman unclenches her blood-spattered hand from the knife embedded in her late husband's skull. She starts giggling hysterically.

Luke takes his cue and, grabbing his boots, heads for the door. But the rottweiler, finished lapping up his tasty red snack, goes chasing after him.

It's not the
a bisexual

70's any-
was fash-

more,
ionable.

when

being mar-

ried to



cut to

ext—SUBURBIA—night

Luke, his disheveled clothes flapping in the wind, tears down the street with the ferocious rottweiler nipping at his heels.

cut to

ext—7-Eleven—night

Jon emerges from the fluorescent glass-enclosed oasis into the surrounding seediness of the night. Steam rises from the extra-large cup of coffee he's toting.

In the parking lot. A TALL BLACK DRAG QUEEN in sequins is reciting the Bill of Rights.

Ignoring her, Jon climbs back into his beat-up astrocruiser.

cut to

ext—FILM NOIR-ish ALLEYWAY—night

Diagonal *Caligari*-ish shadows intersect, signifying danger, a universe deranged, out of balance.

Luke, having finally eluded the pugnacious rottweiler, wanders into the tangled spiderweb, the unsuspecting victim.

He stops to replace the unlit cigarette in his mouth. Takes a reassuring swig of Jack Daniel's.

OS MALE VOICE

Prepare to swallow your teeth, faggot.

Luke whirls around to find

A TRIO OF BASEBALL BAT-WIELDING SKINHEADS, beer-bellied *Clockwork Orange*-style thugs wearing T-shirts and caps that proudly advertise Amerikan Kulture at its Kraskest: "BUDWEISER," "JAWS 2," "D.A.R.E.," "MILK DUDS," "GUNS 'N' ROSES," "BART SIMPSON."

LUKE

the cigarette falling from his lips

Oh shit.

SKINHEAD 2

his bat slicing the air with an ominous SWISH

It's cosmetic surgery time, honey.

The skinhead threesome close in like a noose. But Luke suddenly pulls the handgun out of his sack.

LUKE

Guess again, douchebags.

He starts FIRING WILDLY and the scene shatters into a confusing JUMBLE of CHAOTIC JUMPCUTS.

DRIVING POV—night

Nocturnal mist swirling smothering the city's electric lights.

int—CAR

Jon staring at the Road Ahead. He takes a sip of the hot coffee and gets out his recorder again. Thinks a minute.

JON *into recorder*

Well, now what?

DRIVING POV

The infinite darkness offers no answers. A big howling nothingness.

SUDDENLY

A Figure appears, phantomlike, frantically waving, in the path of Jon's headlights.

Jon SLAMS on his SCREAMING brakes, sending his coffee flying. The Figure is now at his window, POUNDING desperately on the glass. Jon just stares at the terrifying apparition, like a nightmare that's happening too fast to react to. Before he knows what's going on, the Figure slips in the unlocked passenger door and is in the seat beside him, pleading between breathless gasps.

LUKE

Go. Just fuckin' go. Dude . . . Please GO!

Completely numb with shock, Jon manages to gun the accelerator, and they roar off into the all-devouring night.

cut to

DRIVING POV—night

Shaky, dark footage. An illuminated Bridge leading Nowhere.

LUKE *o.s.*

They were trying to kill me. The motherfuckers were gonna *kill* me . . .

JON *o.s.*

What? Who?

LUKE *o.s.*

These butt-ugly motherfuckers . . . with baseball bats.

Jon looks over at Luke, who, trembling with adrenaline-pumped fear, plays with a cigarette in his hand.

JON

D'you wanna call the police?

LUKE

Fuck the police.

cut to

Go.
Just
fucking
go.
Dude...
please.
Go.



JON

Well, what? You want me to take you someplace?

Luke's eyes meet Jon's for the first time.

LUKE

Off this goddamn insane planet.

JON

Got a second choice?

Luke just shrugs.

JON

Wanna go to the hospital?

LUKE

Fuck no.

JON

Where do you live? I'll take you home.

Luke shrugs again.

LUKE

I'm kinda . . . between places at the moment.

Jon looks over at Luke. It's starting to dawn on him.

JON

sighing

Oh great.

They drive on for a moment in uneasy silence.

JON

So what? Where d'you want me to drop you?

Luke says nothing, staring at the cigarette he's twirling between his fingers. Sometimes he feels like the World is just too fucking much for him to handle.

LUKE

finally

I don't know.

More strained silence.

JON

Well, there's gotta be *someplace* . . .

LUKE

I don't know. Fuck. I don't care. It doesn't really matter. Just stop the fuckin' car. Dump me out right here. I JUST DON'T GIVE A FUCK ANYMORE.

He gazes out at the Big Cold Void outside his window waiting to swallow him up again.

Off this
god-
damn
insane
planet.

Jon looks over at his passenger in distress. Sighs.

cut to



int—JON'S APT—night

Darkness.
OS voices, keys in the lock.

JON o.s.
So how'm I supposed to know that you aren't
some homicidal maniac who's gonna bludgeon
me to death and rip off my CD collection?

The door opens, light flooding in from the outside, silhouetting the pair.

LUKE
Guess you're just gonna have to Trust Me.

Jon flicks on the light, warily eyeing his overnight houseguest.

JON
Why do I find that not so very reassuring?

Their eyes connect for an awkward beat. They smile.

JON
*noticing the cigarette hanging conspicuously
from Luke's lip*
You gonna smoke that thing?

LUKE
I don't smoke . . . cigarettes

JON
shrugging
Whatever.

He goes off to fetch blankets for the couch.

JON
So first thing tomorrow, you're history, a memory. Right?

LUKE
You're behind the wheel.
considering for a moment
Don't I even get breakfast?

JON from o.s.
Coffee. Orange juice, if you're lucky.

IN THE HALLWAY
Jon pulls a tattered pile of blankets from the closet.

LUKE calling from o.s.
Hey, what's all this stuff?

JON
What?

He reenters the living room, where Luke's looking through a pile of notes and photos left out on the coffeetable.

JON

Oh, just a bunch of shit for this article I'm writing on "The Death of Cinema" . . .

LUKE

What, you like review movies or something?

JON

When all else fails,
dumps the blankets onto the sofa
You know what they say: those who can't do,
teach; those who can't teach, get paid 25 cents
a word to rip other people's work to shreds.

LUKE

Oh.
noticing Craig in his nearby fishbowl
You a fish freak, too?

He takes out his bottle of JD and, wandering toward Craig, takes a swallow.

JON

It's my ex's. I just wound up with custody.

Luke offers Jon the bottle.

JON

No thanks.

LUKE

What's his name?

JON

My ex or the fish?

LUKE

Both.

JON

Craig. Both.

Luke unceremoniously drops his tattered Levi's, ready for bed.

LUKE

Hey, can I grab a shower?

JON

*trying unsuccessfully to keep cool in the face of
Luke's half-nakedness*
. . . sure. There's a clean towel on the, uh . . .

His voice trails off.

LUKE

. . . rack?

JON
Yeah, rack. You, uh, need anything else?

LUKE
Like what, milk and cookies?

JON
laughing nervously at the lame joke
Heh. Well, I guess I'll . . . uh, if you don't mind, maybe I will have just a little . . .
indicating the bottle in Luke's hand

Luke obliges, handing it over. Jon takes a quick swallow, which leaves him gasping for air.

JON
choking, handing the bottle back to Luke
... th-thanks.

Luke smiles, takes another swig for himself.

LUKE
Don't mention it.
another fiendish smile
Well, 'night

JON
still coughing, recomposing himself as best he can
... 'night.

He flees for the sanctuary of his own room.

int—BEDROOM—night

Jon undressing. He can hear in the BG, the OS SOUND of the stereo being turned on, the stations changing.

JON
Go ahead. Make yourself at home.

He rolls his eyes.

Over the radio, "There Is a Light That Never Goes Out" by THE SMITHS comes wafting in.

Jon takes off his pants and, removing the bulge of his wallet from his back pocket, he pauses a moment. Considering . . .

cut to

JON, stashing his wallet, watch, car keys, portable CD player and private cache of prerolled joints under the mattress. Better safe than sorry, he figures.

SUDDENLY, he's startled by a hand on his shoulder which snakes its way around to his left pectoral. Whirling around, he finds

cut to



Y'wanna
know
what
it
is
I
like
best
about
guys'
bodies?

24

Welcome

LUKE on the pantherlike prowl. He slowly lets the unlit cigarette fall from his lower lip onto the floor.

LUKE
a predatory smile creeping across his face
Yo.

Embarrassed, caught in the act, Jon drops the mattress with a dusty THUMP.

Luke grabs both his arms, pinning them to his sides. Winding his tongue up along his neck, he whispers hotly into Jon's ear.

LUKE
A bit paranoid, are we?

Jon can't speak—he's either going to be killed or get laid—and both prospects seem pretty electrifyingly scary at the moment.

LUKE
I thought I'd hold off on the shower . . .

He pushes Jon down onto the bed and takes a gulp from the bottle of Jack Daniel's tucked under his arm.

LUKE
... 'n' I was wondering if maybe you wanted another drink.

Jon just lies there speechless, the helpless captive on the bed. Luke takes that as a yes and pours the whiskey into his gaping mouth. Jon sputters and coughs as Luke climbs onto the bed beside him.

LUKE
Y'wanna know what it is I like best about guys' bodies? . . .

Eyes wide with fright, Jon is still choking on the liquor.

LUKE
Glad you asked. Well, they've got this line running through the middle of 'em, dividing their torsos right in half . . .

demonstrating, he traces the semivisible border on Jon's chest with his fingertip
It starts up here, around the "V" of the collarbone, travels down, between their pecs, over the belly, then, y'know, it just kind of fades out down here where the trickling of hair begins . . .

He slowly, inexorably bends to softly kiss the precious zone which he's speaking of.

LUKE
an absolutely evil smile
End of anatomy lesson.

club, partner

He moves trick up on the bed so that his face is millimeters away from Jon's. Their eyes lock for an intensely erotic beat.

LUKE
Is that thoroughly killer or what?

Jon can hardly breathe, let alone answer. He just barely nods.

Luke touches the end of Jon's nose with the tip of his tongue.

This all has got Jon filled overflowing with desire, but he hesitates . . .

LUKE
Hey, you OK?

JON
Huh? Yeah, I just, uh . . .

LUKE
Y'want me to stop?

JON
N-no. But I, I think you ought to know that . . .

LUKE
What?

JON
That I, uh . . . I just found out this afternoon,
that I, I'm . . .
he sighs, totally at a loss for words

A weird, knowing smile spreads over Luke's face.

LUKE
If you're trying to say what I think you are, don't
worry about it.

Jon gives him a questioning look, which Luke answers with a voluptuous kiss on
the lips.

LUKE
It's no big deal.

They kiss again, Luke lying down on top of Jon on the bed. The warm weight of
his lean body has Jon so turned on, the room spins . . . They sink beyond the
bottom edge of the frame.

LUKE o.s.
Welcome to the club, pardner.

BLACK (4 seconds)

int—BEDROOM—night

After.

Jon lies there. Wiped (no pun intended).



Luke finishes drying himself with the grodified cum-towel.

JON

Oh wow.

Luke finishes drying himself with the grodified cum-towel.

LUKE

Hey, how about one of those joints?

He hands the yucky towel back to Jon, who makes a grossed-out face.

JON

Thanks.

dropping the towel to the floor

Do you always smoke after sex?

LUKE

glancing down in the direction of his cock
Don't know, never looked.

Jon leans over to retrieve a joint from under the mattress.

JON

Let me rephrase that. Do you always tell lame
jokes after sex?

Jon grabs a lighter from the bedside table, struggles to get the joint lit.

LUKE

'Scuze me. Thought you might have a sense of
humor.

Jon's having a hard time with the joint, his hands shaking and the lighter refusing to cooperate.

LUKE

Are you nervous or something?

JON

No, what makes you think . . .
getting flustered as the lighter fails to ignite
. . . that?

Luke shrugs.

LUKE

E.S.P.

Jon still can't get the fucking thing lit.

JON

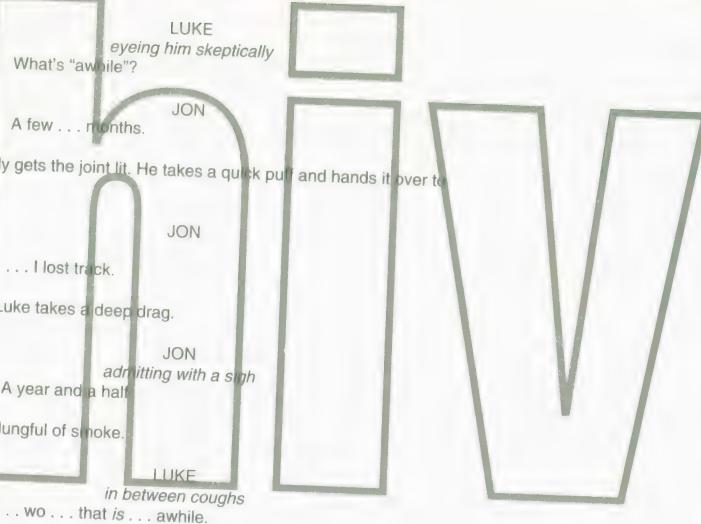
a confession
It's just been awhile since I've had sex. Like
this.

LUKE

"Like this"?

JON

Yeah, y'know . . .



LUKE eyeing him skeptically
What's "awhile?"

A few . . . months.

JON

He finally, finally gets the joint lit. He takes a quick puff and hands it over to Luke.

JON . . . I lost track.

Watching him, Luke takes a deep drag.

JON admitting with a sigh
A year and a half

Luke gags on a lungful of smoke.

LUKE in between coughs
. . . wo . . . that is . . . awhile.

JON sheepish, embarrassed now
You want a glass of water or something?

LUKE shaking his head, still coughing
No . . . I'm . . . OK.

JON Well, I sure could use one.

He gets out of the bed.

LUKE coughing
Hey . . . I hope you're not . . . I mean, I didn't mean to . . .

Jon is perched on the edge of the mattress.

JON I'm fine. I just always get hyper after sex . . .

LUKE lying back in the bed
It always makes me sooooooo relaxed . . .

He takes another hit of the joint, offers it back to Jon.

LUKE
Want s'more?

JON

shakes his head
No thanks.

Luke contentedly settles into the covers.

LUKE
He takes another drag
No doubt about it, sex is good food.

cut to

BLACK (2 seconds)

cut to

int—BEDROOM—later

Luke snoring loudly, totally gone
Jon lies wide awake, like a cat in the dark, staring at the ceiling.

He looks over at Luke, who's deep into REM. Stealthily, like a burglar, he sneaks out of the bed, careful not to wake Luke (though nothing short of a nuclear explosion could really accomplish that feat).

cut to

TV
Some STRANGE COMMERCIAL, like the Egg in the Frying Pan "This Is Your Brain on Drugs" ad, flickering on the screen.

int—LIVING ROOM

Jon sits alone in the pre-dawn gloom, bathed in the relentless blue eye-glow radiating from the insomniac's best friend. Losing himself in the mind-numbing trance of the video-barbiturate.

cut to

BLACK (6 seconds)

cut to

int—BEDROOM—the next morning

The New Day

finds Luke asleep, fragile, like a baby in its arms, buried under the stained sheets.

Jon (his bare legs, at least) enters the frame, standing over him. He looks down at his snoozing guest. Smiles. Luke stirs, slowly coming to consciousness.

JON
G'morning.

Luke blinks in the prickly sunlight, his head throbbing from the hedonistic pleasures of the night before.

LUKE
Says who?

JON

Breakfast is served.

Luke looks up and foxily runs his hand along the fine hairs of Jon's right calf . . .

LUKE

Oh yeah?

JON

On the kitchen table, I mean.

int—KITCHEN—morning

The promised OJ and coffee along with the other ingredients of an All-American breakfast: Hostess Mini-Donuts, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Cereal, beer.

Jon in his weathered robe, and Luke, in his underwear, sit at the table.

LUKE

mouth munching full

I'm serious, dude. So like figure, we're both gonna die—maybe in ten years, maybe next week—but it's not like I really wanted to live forever and get old 'n' fat in this stupid ugly world anyway.

JON

nodding between spoonfuls of Turtles
Yeah, uh-huh.

Luke takes a big swig of beer.

LUKE

It's like we're casualties of the Sexual Revolution. The generation before us had all the fun and we get to pick up the fuckin' tab. I mean, anyone who got fucked before "safe sex" was even invented is fucked. It's all just part of the Nazi Republican Final Solution, y'know, germ warfare . . .

he belches loudly

... Genocide.

JON

Now who's being paranoid?

LUKE

Not moi.

popping a mini-donut in his mouth

But think about this: so there's thousands, maybe millions of us with this thing inside us. This time-bomb making our futures finite. Suddenly, we've got nothing to lose. We can just say Fuck It. Fuck Work. Fuck the System. Fuck Everything.

JON

30

cut to

**The
gener-
ation
before
us had
all the
fun,
and
we
get to**

**pick
up
the
fuC
king
tab.**

skeptical, pouring more beer into his OJ

Uh-huh . . .

LUKE

Don't you get it? We're totally *FREE*. We Can Do Anything We Fucking Want.

JON

Like?

Luke grins, fishes through the pockets of his nearby 501s. Extracts a flat piece of magic plastic, handing it over to Jon.

JON

reading the name off the card
Ken Robinson?

Polishing off his beer, Luke smiles craftily.

LUKE

A friend let me borrow it.

cut to

SERIES OF SHOTS

The poor Visa Card getting the bejesus charged out of it as Jon and Luke go on a wild rampage of a shopping spree.

ext—SMELLROSE AVE—day

Jon and Luke stroll along the garish trendoid boulevard, toting armloads of goods like well-behaved consumers. Luke's got a brand new beatbox on his shoulder, blasting the industrial assault of MINISTRY's "Flashback" (he's also got a new Nine Inch Nails T-shirt on).

JON

We ought to at least feel a little guilty.

LUKE

What the fuck for? We've still got like \$1700 left on our limit.

JON

And what happens if we get caught?

LUKE

I never get caught.

JON

You are fucking mad.

Luke grins and impulsively kisses Jon on the lips. They inadvertently bump into a large, belligerent NEONAZI PUNK who scowls at their public display of affection.

NEONAZI PUNK

Watch it, fags.

Caught offguard, Luke turns and confronts the hostile Punk.

31

LUKE
Excuse me?

NEONAZI PUNK
I said y'know what AIDS stands for? *Adios Infected Dick Suckers.*

Wanting to avoid a scene, Jon tries to diffuse the tense triangle of hateful glares.

JON
pulling Luke by the arm
C'mon. Forget it

Luke is just staring at the Punk, eyes filled with rage.

JON
Let's go.

Jon leads Luke away and the Neonazi Punk goes swaggering off, laughing triumphantly.

NEONAZI PUNK *o.s.*
Fuckin' chickenshit cocksuckers...

Jon guides Luke in the other direction, trying to cool him out.

JON
That asshole's not worth the bother.

They're just about in the clear when Luke suddenly yanks free and goes charging back after the Punk, wielding his beatbox-bludgeon high in the air. The volume knob inadvertently cranked up, the ultraviolent song is pitched at an utterly INSANE LEVEL.

Bewildered, Jon witnesses the OS violence, speechless.

His ghettoblaster spattered with homophobic blood, Luke boomerangs back practically knocking Jon off his feet, sending packages flying everywhere.

LUKE
shoving Jon hard
GO!

They flee.

int—APT—day

The door SLAMS. The pair return, breathless.

JON
ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR FUCKING MIND?!

LUKE
cool as a psychotic cucumber
Shit happens.

32

Jon sighs, exasperated.

LUKE
He deserved it.
remorseless
I hope he's fuckin' dead.

Jon is *aggg*.

LUKE
Tell me you didn't want to see that motherfucker's head split open.

Jon just stares at Luke, incredulous, for a long beat.

JON
I think you'd better go now.

Luke, really hurt and upset, just looks at Jon.

JON
Read my lips, "dude."
emphatically enunciating each word
I said, I Don't Want You Around Here
Anymore.

Luke stands there for the longest time, like he can't believe what he's hearing.

LUKE
OK.
turning to leave, losing it
OK OK, O.K.!

He storms off, SLAMMING the door again.

Jon's left standing there in the awful quiet. He runs his hand through his messed-up hair, starts pacing around. There's a familiar pitiful SQUEAK.

He looks down, sees the number *ass* at his feet. He kicks it savagely across the room.

BLACK (3 seconds)

int—BEDROOM—night

Several bleak hours later, Jon sits there in the unwavering luminous eye of his computer monitor.

INSERT CLOSE-UP
One word glowing on the screen:

FUCK.

Depressed, Jon stares blankly at the word staring back at him. He just wants to forget. Forget about Luke. Forget about the whole tangled-up ball-of-confusion. But even just the hint of its memory causes a stirring in his dick.

33

He furiously starts typing on his keyboard.

INSERT CLOSE-UP

The word multiplying like a cancer cell, filling the screen:

FUCK FUCK FUCK FUCK FUCK FUCK
FUCK FUCK FUCK FUCK FUCK FUCK
FUCK FUCK FUCK FUCK FU . . .
(till it just overflows out of the frame)

Jon sighs.

Somehow his word processing tantrum did little to relieve the angst building up inside him.

The OS phone RINGS, loud and jangling. Once. Almost a second time, before Jon snags it.

JON

Lo?

HUSKY MALE VOICE v.o.
Are you ready to get off yet?

JON

Would you just fuckin' get a life?

He SLAMS the receiver down.

Left there stranded in the reverberating silence, he picks up the receiver again, dials . . .

cut to

int—SHIPS—night

Like a million times past, Jon sits with Darcy amidst the toasters and muzak, drinking bad coffee at their usual table by the window.

JON

God. Am I fucked up.

DARCY

I know, I know, it's serious.

Jon swirls the meager amount of black caffeine left in the bottom of his cup.

DARCY

What is it with you and guys that turn out to be bona fide psychopaths?

JON

shrugs

Must be fate. I seem to attract trouble like shit draws flies.

DARCY

laughs, dragging on her cig
That's a nice way of putting it.



JON

I just can't seem to get it out of my head.
It's like I get a hard-on just thinking about him,
the touch and smell of his skin . . .

DARCY
smiling

Gross me out, why don't you?

Jon smiles, too.

JON

I guess I'm just feeling really needy right now.
as an afterthought
It's either that or plain old-fashioned horniness.

They laugh. Jon finishes off the last of his coffee.

cut to

ext—THE HAUNTED PARKING LOT—night

They stand beneath the flickering fluorescents, Jon beside his trashed car, Darcy next to her way cool Kawasaki 850.

DARCY
slipping on her helmet

Y'sure you don't wanna sleep over? We can stay up all night, go to Millie's for breakfast . . .

JON

I've gotta get up and work on that stupid fucking article.

DARCY

You gonna be OK?

JON

Nope.

They both smile.

DARCY

Do you blame me for worrying about you, dufus?

JON

No, but really, Darcy, it's getting to be like "rally round the fag" . . .

Darcy laughs, hugs him goodnight.

A TALL, MUSCULAR GUY wearing nothing but sunglasses, a Tarzan loincloth, and Mickey Mouse ears rollerskates up to them.

TARZAN

Got any spare change?

Jon and Darcy both just look at the Guy, shaking their heads.

JON
Sorry.

TARZAN
Fuckin' tightwad poseurs.

He skates off into the all-enveloping darkness, leaving Jon and Darcy standing there looking at each other like "Huh?"

cut to

int—LOFT—night

Peter lies half naked, asleep on the couch, in the flickering cold light of the TV set.
The OS sound of DARCY, wearily coming in the front door, wakes him up.

PETER
sleepily

... hey.

Darcy enters the frame, standing over him.

DARCY
distracted
Hi. What're you doing still up?

PETER
rubbing his eyes
What time is it?

DARCY

Late.

Peter makes room for Darcy on the couch, but she instead heads for the kitchen.

DARCY *o.s.*
I don't think I'm gonna be able to sleep. Again.

PETER
Y'wanna pill?

Darcy, foraging through the refrigerator for a snack, doesn't reply.

PETER
a smiling invitation
Y'wanna make some nooky-nooky?

Darcy emerges from the fridge with a jar of peanut butter and a carrot.

DARCY
I'm really worried about Jon.

Peter sighs.

PETER
Darcy . . .

Jon lies there naked in bed with ~~TORSO~~ magazine,

Darcy closes the refrigerator, dunks the carrot into the peanut butter.

DARCY
He's pretending like everything's OK, but . . .
takes a bit of the PB-globbed carrot
I've never seen him so lost before.

PETER
Darcy, it's hardly like he's the most well-adjusted person in the world to start with.

DARCY
What's that supposed to mean?

PETER
I mean, we're talking about a guy who went into a severe depression for two weeks when Echo and the Bunnymen broke up.

DARCY
So?
takes another bite
And it was only a week and a half.

Peter just rolls his eyes, pulls himself up off the couch.

PETER
Come on. Let's go to bed.

DARCY
screwing the lid back on the peanut butter
I think I'm gonna work for awhile.

She finishes her carrot and puts the PB back in the fridge.

PETER
heading off for bed
Whatever.

DARCY
searching around the messy kitchen
Are we totally out of cigarettes again?

cut to

int—BEDROOM—night

Jon lies there naked in bed with *TORSO* magazine, trying to get off. But it's no use: he's too tired, depressed, distracted.

He sighs, giving up. Tosses the magazine aside. Settling in, he feels something strange, hard and cold under the covers . . . investigating, he finds

LUKE'S BOTTLE OF JACK DANIEL'S left, forgotten, in the bed. He unscrews the cap, takes a big, comforting swallow. It doesn't really make him feel much better, but it does manage to dull his senses a little. He takes another swig . . .

cut to

trying to get off.

BLACK (2 seconds)

Int—BEDROOM—later

The bottle on the bedside table is practically empty.

Jon lies, finally unconscious, sleeping fitfully.

SUDDENLY

jolted awake by a bad dream, he bolts upright only to confront an even scarier apparition at the foot of his bed.

LUKE sits perched on the mattress, covered with blood. His clothes trashed. A pistol stuck in his quivering mouth.

His head still whirling from the alcohol, Jon just stares at the frighteningly surreal vision. He slowly reaches out to touch Luke's arm as if to ensure that he's real.

Luke doesn't move, the metal gun clattering against his teeth.

Very cautiously, like he's defusing a bomb, Jon leans forward (which is difficult enough in his inebriated condition) and slowly withdraws the saliva-coated gun-barrel from between Luke's trembling lips. He half expects the thing to go off at any second with gruesomely explosive force . . . but it doesn't.

Jon looks down at the pistol, warm and wet in his hands.

JON

Where did this come from? . . .

Luke says nothing, sitting there shivering in the dark.

JON

What's wrong?

Luke still says nothing.

JON

placing a reassuring hand on Luke's tense shoulder

Hey . . .

Luke responds with a muscular, almost violent embrace.

LUKE

pressed into Jon's chest
I've blown it. I've totally fuckin' blown it.

Jon feels the heated moisture of Luke's blood, sweat and tears against his bare skin.

JON

What happened?

Luke just sits there shaking in Jon's tentatively consoling arms for a long moment. Then finally

cut to



LUKE

I think I killed a cop.

Jon drops away.

JON

What?

Luke is silent.

JON

What d'you mean you "think" you killed a cop?

LUKE

shrugging

I dunno. I mean, It's not like I stopped to check his pulse or anything. But it looked like dead pork to me.

Jon just sits there, numb.

LUKE

You gotta help me.

JON

laughing at the absurdity of it all
Do what?

LUKE

Get away.

JON

rolling his eyes

To where?

LUKE

I've got a friend up north; we can hide out there for awhile at least . . .

Jon shakes his head in disbelief.

JON

Why me?

LUKE

shrugs

I don't know anyone else.

Looking into the dizzying depths of Luke's eyes, Jon realizes that he's in way too deep to get out now.

JON

sighing

Tell me this is a nightmare

cut to

it
looked like
dead
pork
to me

ext—THE PITCH BLACK UNKNOWN—night

Stealing away like thieves in the night, they load up Jon's grimy, tired Subaru.

As Jon SLAMS the trunk shut, LUKE offers him the last of the Jack Daniel's.

LUKE

Last drop—want it?

JON

No thanks.

Luke gulps it down, and tosses the bottle away, which makes a tiny echoing shatter as it hits the empty street.

LUKE

Ready?

JON

No.

LUKE

slapping Jon on the shoulder
Y'know, sometimes you gotta just say, "What the fuck."

Jon looks unconvinced. He and Luke get in the car.

The battleworn engine ignites with a cancerous wheeze. The headlights come on.

And they're off and running . . . Well—almost—first there's a

cut to

ext—AM/PM—night

They've got to fuel up.

At the illuminated 24-hour Space Age oasis, Jon finishes filling the gas tank. Luke comes over bearing a big bag of Crunch Tators, a Jumbo Java, a brand new bottle of JD and one of those neon 32-ounce refillable sport bottles.

LUKE

giving Jon a handful of coins

Here's your change.

Replacing the pump nozzle, Jon looks at nickels and pennies in his palm.

JON

That's it?

LUKE

I had to get supplies.

He dumps the contents of the sports bottle splashing out on the asphalt and pours the whole bottle of Jack Daniel's into it.

JON

Y'sure we've gotta do this?

LUKE

sipping on the straw of his drink
Dude, come on. It's gonna be rad. A Big

40

Now I'm a fugitive, driving to fuck-knows-where in the middle of the night, facing an accessory to murder rap.
Forty-eight hours ago, I was just another bummed-out, HIV-positive homo minding my own business.

Adventure.

Jon looks like he's about to be sick.

cut to

SERIES OF SHOTS

DRIVING POVS—night

On the labyrinthine expressways.

Accompanied by the surging, hard-edged sound of JESUS AND MARY CHAIN's "Coast to Coast" and the mesmerizing MURMUR of the car engine, an omnipresent monotone mantra pulling them deep into a somnambulistic trance.

LUKE o.s.

Don't worry, be happy.

JON o.s.

Shut up.

LUKE o.s.

Hey, y'know, this is sorta like that movie . . .

JON o.s.

What? *They Live By Night?* *Gun Crazy?*
Pierrot Le Fou? *Badlands?* . . .

LUKE

No, the one with Richard Gere and that French chick.

cut to

BLACK (1 second)

cut to

DRIVING POV—night

Past the eerie graveyard of electric windmills.

JON o.s.

So what happens once we get to San Francisco?

LUKE o.s.

I'll figure something out.

JON o.s.

Oh great. Forty-eight hours ago, I was just another bummed-out, HIV-positive homo minding my own business. Now I'm a fugitive, driving to fuck-knows-where in the middle of the night, facing an accessory to murder rap.

LUKE

Yeah, well the world is a big, confusing place, ain't it?

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Smiling, he takes a big slurp from his sports bottle.

BLACK (1 second)

cut to

DRIVING POV—night

Past a terrible cataclysmic wreck-mangled metal, coagulated traffic, ambulances, blood, guts and oil in pools on the road.

INSIDE THE CAR

As they crawl by the ominous, gruesome miragelike sight, Jon feels a shiver run up his spine. Twirling his unlit cigarette between his fingers, Luke peers out at the crash.

LUKE

Wo. Bummer.

Jon looks over at Luke, at the accident, back at Luke. Keeps driving.

BLACK (1 second)

cut to

cut to

DRIVING POV—night

An indeterminate number of miles/hours/millennia later.

The Relentless Nocturnal Expressway keeps rolling, rolling, rolling as creepy CABARET VOLTAIRE-ish ELECTRONDONE plays on the stereo.

LUKE o.s.

What time is it?

JON o.s.

Like five-something.

LUKE o.s.

You tired? Want me to drive awhile?

JON o.s.

You want to?

LUKE o.s.

Sure.

The POV stops.

ext—CAR ON THE ROAD

Luke gets out, trots around to the driver's side, as Jon climbs over into the passenger seat.

DRIVING POV

cut to

MINISTRY'S

fast,

furious

"Burning

Inside"

blares.

Resumes moving again.

LUKE o.s.

You can go ahead and sleep if you want.

JON o.s.

I am kinda beat.

The POV veers a little to the left.

JON o.s.

Hey, your hands're freezing. Keep 'em on the wheel.

Luke laughs, ejecting the GLOOMY MUSIC out of the tape deck.

LUKE o.s.

Man, that stuff was putting me to sleep.

OS, we can here the SOUND of him riffling through cassettes for something else to listen to. The POV sways all over the road.

JON o.s.

Uh, you wanna concentrate on driving?

Luke finally finds and inserts a tape he likes: MINISTRY's fast, furious "Burning Inside" blares.

JON o.s.

Thanks for the nice, relaxing nap music.

LUKE o.s.

Oh. Sorry.

He lowers the volume half-a-decibel.

The POV now wobbles, accelerates, drifts around in time to the raucous beat.

JON o.s.

Ever hear of using one lane at a time?

int—CAR

Luke straining to hear over the deafening music.

LUKE

Huh?

Jon snatches the sports bottle full of booze from Luke's hand.

LUKE

Hey!

JON

You're a bad enough driver as it is, and I really don't want to end my life splattered on the pavement out here in East Bumfuck . . .

DRIVING POV

An ONCOMING SEMI BLARES its horn.

LOOK OUT!!!
JON o.s.

They avoid death (barely).

LUKE
Don't spazz out, man.

Jon looks like he needs an airsick bag.

JON
Where'd you get your license? Beirut?

LUKE
What license?

ext—CAR ON THE ROAD

SCREECHES to a halt.

BACK INSIDE

Jon is just staring at Luke, who sits there busting up. He leans over and cuts off the ignition.

ext—CAR ON THE ROAD

The engine and lights go dead.

JON o.s.
We oughta be alright here till morning.

LUKE o.s.
I gotta piss anyhow.

He rolls the window down and, sticking his dick out the window, relieves himself.

BACK INSIDE

Luke catches sight of his red, bleary eyes in the rearview mirror. He sighs, shaking his heavy head.

Finished peeing, Luke stuffs his thing back into his jeans. Rolls the window back up.

LUKE
Fuck, it's freezing out there. Thought my dick was gonna break off like an icicle.

JON
Now that'd be a shame.

LUKE
Y'wanna get in back?

Jon just sits there a minute, staring blankly at the darkness surrounding them. Finally, he mutters a weary

I guess.

→kaita

2id pr
ng his

→kaita

9it two

i am wild about you, dude.

stick

→kaita

→kaita

→kaita

They go tumbling over into the backseat. Landing in a tangled heap, Luke's face practically on top of Jon's.

LUKE
cracking up

Are we having fun yet?

Before Jon can respond, Luke covers his mouth with a deep, passionate kiss. They separate, but their lips are still so close they're almost touching.

LUKE
I am wild about you, dude.

JON
dead tired

Whatever you say.

They kiss again, sink intertwined into the shadowy recesses.

ext—CAR ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

Beneath the awesome panorama of pre-dawn blackness, the car is a molecule, barely a dot of insignificance in the expansive, god-forsaken universe.

cut to

BLACK (6 seconds)

cut to

Int—CAR—the next morning

The piercing sun glares through the streaked window, waking up Jon, who lies curled up fetus-like in the backseat. He stirs, the light stinging his eyes, his head pounding in hungover agony.

It takes him a minute to orient himself, to figure out that he's not just waking from some bad dream . . . Finding Luke gone, he starts to freak, thinking he's been ditched.

JON
bolting upright

Shit.

Then he sees LUKE standing behind the car, taking his morning leak while sucking on his sports bottleful of whiskey.

LUKE

'Morning, dude.

Jon rubs his throbbing temples.

LUKE

I don't know about you, but I'm so fuckin' hungry I could eat my leg.

cut to

DRIVING POV—morning

The serpentine freeway winding toward San Francisco.

The remnants of Breakfast for Boys on the Go clutters the dashboard: empty OJ containers, granola bar wrappers, yogurt cups, a half-eaten tray of french fries with ketchup.

JON o.s.
What do you mean you "lost" his phone number?

LUKE o.s.
Don't have a cardiac. I know the way . . .
Get off at the next exit.

JON o.s.
How come I have this horrible sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach?

LUKE o.s.
It's probably the fries . . .

DRIVING POV – morning

The circuitous streets of San Francisco.

LUKE o.s.
Turn left here . . . Yeah, I think this is the neighborhood . . .

JON o.s.
How can you tell? They all look alike.

LUKE o.s.
Wait. This is it.

JON o.s.
No way.

LUKE o.s.
Didn't I tell you? You just gotta have faith.

ext—STREET—morning

The car idling in a nondescript residential area. Luke jumps out, pausing at Jon's window (he's now got his Ray-Bans covering up his bloodshot eyes).

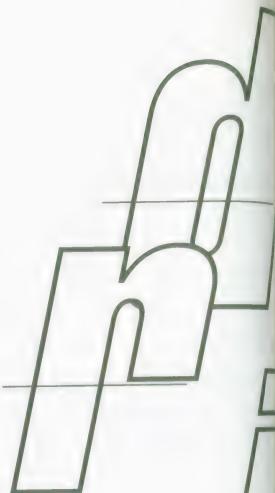
LUKE
Be back in a flash.

He gives Jon a quick kiss, runs off.

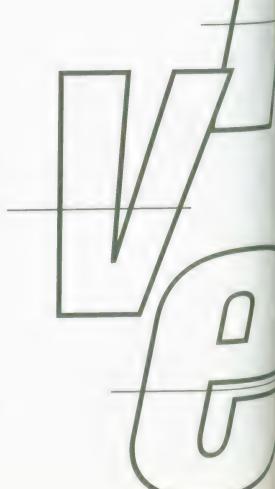
ext—GUPPIE DUPLEX morning

At the iron security gate, Luke anxiously rings the buzzer. Once. Twice. Three

cut to



cut to



cut to

times.

Finally,
GUS, a fashion-biker with five-o'clock shadow and big earrings, comes staggering groggily down the front steps. He's got a large black motorcycle jacket thrown on over his robe and slippers.

LUKE

Yo, Gus!

Rubbing his sleepy eyes, Gus makes his way over. Stops.

LUKE

How's it hangin' dude?

Gus just stares at Luke.

LUKE

Hey man, don't you remember me?

He looks Luke up and down.

GUS

No.

LUKE

C'mon, Gus. Gay Pride Parade, two, maybe three years ago? . . .

No bells are ringing. Gus's face is a total blank.

cut to

CAR ON THE STREET

Luke gets back in the car, SLAMMING the door.

JON

Well?

LUKE

Drive.

JON

What?

LUKE

Drive, I said. I'll have to figure something else out.

Jon rolls his eyes.

JON

What have I done to deserve this?

DRIVING POV—morning

Now heading out of the city, the doubledecker freeway clotted with commuter traffic.

JON o.s.
So we drive all fucking night long . . .

LUKE o.s.
I said I'll figure something out.

JON o.s.
an exasperated sigh
Well, now where to?

A blank pause. Luke just fumes.

LUKE
blowing up, pointing in all directions
Here, there, this way, that way. What
Difference Does It Make?

Luke takes a big sip of JD from his sports bottle. Jon just looks at him. Sighs again.

JON
All I know is that if I don't take a shower and brush my teeth in about two minutes, I'm going to kill myself.

Luke rolls his eyes.

JON
I'm a fag, OK? I can't stand being dirty.

cut to

ext—DESPONDENT CONCRETE RESTSTOP ON THE NEVERENDING HIGHWAY—day

Beyond the outskirts of Nowhere.

Over the tinny radio in the BG, a NEWSCASTER drones monotonously on about AIDS, death, statistics, government red tape, blah, blah, blah . . . (all followed, naturally, by a CHEERY POP JINGLE COMMERCIAL).

Sunbathing shirtless on the hood of the car, with his shades and unlit cigarette in place, Luke is stroking the smooth barrel of his gun, taking aim at imaginary targets in the sky.

Jon, fresh from a stolen shower and shave, comes over drying his hair.

LUKE

Feel better now, Princess?

JON

Piss off.
seeing the gun in Luke's hand
Christ. I thought we were through with the Clint Eastwood routine.

LUKE
It's protection. My security blanket.
noticing what Jon's got on his feet,

48

I'm a

fag,

OK?

**What d'you
say we
head out to
Washington
'n' blow
Bush's
brains out?**



**I can't
stand
being
dirty.**

he starts laughing
What the fuck are those?

Jon self-consciously looks down at a pair of old Snoopy slippers he's wearing.

JON
What? They're my favorites.

LUKE
You are fuckin' weird, y'know that?

JON
I'm weird?

LUKE
smirking, he stares up into the sky again
Yeah. You are.

He starts tracking targets in the sky like he's playing some videogame.

LUKE
What d'you say we head out to Washington 'n' blow Bush's brains out?

JON
Oh, now there's a great idea. At least hide that thing, will you?

LUKE
ignoring him
Better yet, we can hold him at gunpoint and inject him with a syringeful of our blood. How much y'wanna bet they'd have the Magic Cure by tomorrow?

Jon forcefully grabs Luke's hand holding the gun, forcing it down.

JON
I said *put the gun away*, man.

Jon's got Luke's hand pinned to the car hood like the victor in an arm wrestle.

Struggling, Luke looks into Jon's eyes. A strange grin dawns on his face, like it's all some kind of big game, a contest to him.

Finally, Jon relinquishes his grip.

JON
Just be a little discreet with that thing, OK?

He turns to walk away.

JON
I gotta make a phone call.

He exits, leaving Luke smiling, running the length of the gun barrel along the tip of his sweaty nose.

cut to

49

int—LOFT—day
Darcy sits, brimming with artistic ennui and frustration, at the foot of her “latest piece”—a big, expressionistic thing that looks like a bad acid trip throwing up.

DARCY
bummed, blowing her bangs out of her face
Fuck.

Her self-crit session is cut short by the OS phone RINGING.

IN THE CHAOS OF THE KITCHEN

Darcy hunts through the accumulated garbage, tossing aside old *ARTWEEKS* and *VILLAGE VOICES* to excavate the phone.

DARCY
Hello?
What? Yeah, I'll accept the charges . . .
Jon what the hell? Where are you?

intercut with

ext—PHONEBOOTH OUT IN THE ABYSS—day

Jon inside on the line. While he talks, Luke comes over and, bored, starts decorating the outside of the glass booth with his magic marker.

JON
A *long fuckin'* story . . . Yeah, he came back.
Yeah we're in a shitload of trouble . . . I'm not
sure, somewhere outside of San Francisco. I,
uh, need you to do me a favor. Can you call
Alberto and tell him I need another deadline
extension on the article? And the rent was due
last week, and the mail, oh, and can you feed
Craig?

DARCY
Jon, what's going on? Have you lost your
mind?

JON
Yeah, I sincerely believe I have. I've bitten off
more than I can gag on, that's for sure. But I
really can't talk now . . . uh-huh . . .

Jon's attention is diverted by the elaborate graffiti that Luke has scrawled on the glass. A heart encircling a skull and crossbones along with the words:

JON AND LUKE Till Death Do Us Part

Luke stands there proudly beaming over his creation like a kid in art class. Jon
can't help but smile too.

JON
Darce, I really have to go. I'll call you later . . .
Yeah, tomorrow. I'll try. K. Bye.

Jon hangs up, and before he has the chance to start dwelling on his dire
predicament, Luke grabs him from behind and literally drags him laughing away.



Let's just

park

some-

place

and

have



JON o.s.
Jesusfuckinchrist, would you let me go?

DRIVING POV—day

The post-apocalyptic wasteland pastures.

LUKE o.s.
Well, I give up.

JON o.s.
Huh?

LUKE o.s.
I can't think of anyplace for us to go.

Jon looks over at Luke, who puts his feet up on the dash and takes another
slurp of whiskey.

LUKE
Let's just go. Around, I know, like hang out,
see stuff.

JON
This isn't a vacation. We're supposed to be on
the run.

LUKE
Let's just park someplace and have sex.

JON
laughing
You've gotta be kidding.

Luke playfully runs his fingers along the length of Jon's thigh.

LUKE
No, c'mon.

JON
Don't you ever think about anything else?

LUKE
seductive
I've got a boner.

JON
smiling
Oh yeah?

LUKE
Go ahead. Feel.

JON
I am not gonna fondle your crotch right now.

LUKE
Why not?

Jon has to think about that one for a second . . .

JON

Because I'm a responsible driver.

A temporary deadlock reached, Luke rolls down his window, gazing out at the parched limbo passing by.

HIS POV
mile after endless mile of mechanical grasshoppers sucking at the dead earth.

LUKE o.s.
Hey, y'know why none of the Go-Gos ever got pregnant?

JON o.s.
They're all a bunch of dykes?

LUKE o.s.
'Cuz their lips are sealed.

Jon looks over at Luke.

JON

Yuk yuk.

Luke shrugs, leaning his seat back, and hangs his leg out his open window.

LUKE

Find a gas station, will you? I gotta take a dump.

int—FILTHY MEN'S ROOM—day

CLOSE-UP

KILL FAGGOTS

in big, red, dripping letters on the toilet stall wall, superimposed over various sex-obsessed messages and crude drawings of cocks and pussies.

Luke, on the pot with his pants down around his ankles, reading the message. He takes his Magic Marker out of his boot and adds his own editorial comments to the graffiti wall, crossing out the word "KILL" and adding "RULE OK" after "FAGGOTS."

Smiling, he replaces the marker in his boot, and wipes his ass.

cut to

BLACK (2 seconds)

SOUND PULL-UP. MUSIC ("Faith and Healing" by IAN McCULLOCH) FADES UP.

cut to

kill fag-

gots

Luke is leaning over the front seat, giving Jon a blowjob.

DRIVING POV—day

The freespirited MUSIC continues as the miles of open highway go barreling by.

INSIDE THE CAR

Luke is leaning over the front seat, giving Jon a blowjob. Trying to keep his eyes on the road and his hands on the wheel, Jon sees

HIS POV

a MENACING COP CAR by the side of the road. A butt-ugly pig writing up a ticket for his latest victim.

Jon immediately adopts his best upright driving posture, looking conspicuously inconspicuous as they zoom past the oblivious cop.

cut to

ext—ANYTIME TELLER—day

It's sitting there, looking downright surreal, a kiosk in the middle of nowhere.

CLOSE-UP

Jon's hand punching buttons; money magically comes spewing out.

JON o.s.

There should be enough in this account to keep us going at least till we figure out what the fuck we're doing.

He piles back into the idling car. Luke gives him an enthusiastic kiss.

LUKE

Outstanding.

They kiss again as Jon tromps on the gas. And they're off again into the Big Unknown.

cut to

int—JON'S APT—day

Fumbling with her key in the lock, Darcy enters the empty, still apartment. She feels weird, looking around the eerily abandoned room.

She goes over to Jon's phone machine, which is blinking with messages. She hits the "play" button and starts jotting the messages on a nearby pad of paper.

MESSAGE 1

BEEP. Hi Jon. This is Tammye from the Outreach Clinic. Dr. Safford would like to talk with you about some counseling centers which can get you the help you need. Please give me a call here at 818.555.4776. BEEP.

Darcy begins to wander around the memory-cluttered apartment as she continues taking down the messages. She goes into the kitchen, fetching a pitcher to water the already browning plants.

MESSAGE 2

Yo scumwad. Where the fuck are you? I've got

dried up, dead on
the carpet.

Revolting Cocks tickets for Friday, and this one-time-only offer expires at midnight. Oh yeah, and are you done taping my Nitzer Ebb CDs yet? Later. BEEP.

Darcy goes over to feed Craig, is puzzled to find his bowl vacant. She starts looking around.

MESSAGE 3
it's DARCY's own voice

Hi, it's me, the worrywart. Just calling to see if you wanna maybe to go to that thing at LACE Saturday. I know we both swore we'd never go near performance art again as long as we lived, but Peter's friend Isabella's doing a piece and it might be good for a laugh. Call and let me know, 'K? Talk to you later. BEEP.

Darcy is startled to discover Craig, dried up, dead on the carpet.

ext—PARADISE MOTEL—day

TILT DOWN a dilapidated burnt-out sign splattered with dead bugs.

Jon's battle-weary Subaru resting in the dusty gravel lot.

int—ANONYMOUS MOTEL ROOM—day

The OS SOUND of bedsprings SQUEAKING, sex in progress.

PAN ACROSS the barren, prefab faceless room. Scorching shafts of sunlight spilling in through the blinds. Dingy cotton choners hanging on the bedpost.

TIGHT TWOSHOT

Luke on top of Jon, both of them all sweaty in the sauna-like room. Rubbing their bodies against each other (a.k.a. fucking "collegiate"-style). Overheated, breathing hard, just about ready to go over the brink.

LUKE
Wait. Hold off.

JON
more than a bit taken aback
What?

Luke starts laughing.

LUKE
Don't come yet. I wanna ask you something.

JON
Now?

LUKE
Yeah.

cut to



Jon sighs, frustrated.

JON

Well?

LUKE

straining to keep a straight face
If you had to choose, which would you rather die for, sex or love?

JON *now he cracks up*

Huh?

LUKE

I'm curious.

JON

You're drunk out of your fuckin' mind is more like it.

They both laugh.

JON

Can we continue this discussion later? I'm about to lose my hard-on.

They smile, kiss.

JON

I really hate guys who talk during sex, I ever mention that?

They resume humping.

cut to

BLACK (2 seconds)

cut to

ext—SWIMMING POOL—day

LUKE gliding distorted, ghostlike, beneath the overchlorinated water.

JON sits, propped on a lounge chair, bagging the last rays of the dying afternoon. Talking once again into his recorder.

JON

Notes from oblivion. This whole thing is so unreal, like some waking dream. It's like I've fallen through the Looking Glass . . .

Luke emerges from the water, all sexy and dripping wet like some *International Male* swimwear ad. He comes over casting long diagonal shadows, sprawls out on the rubbery lounge next to Jon's.

LUKE

Watcha doin'?

JON
Sortalike a journal. I like to keep a record of things. Notes. Stuff I think about.

LUKE
What the fuck for?

JON
Well, I use it in my writing for one thing . . .

LUKE
shrugging nonchalantly
Sounds bogus to me. Hey, pass the tanning butter, willya?

Jon just looks at Luke, nonplussed. He reaches over and tosses the suntan lotion at him.

LUKE
catching the bottle with ease
Thanks.

Luke pops the top off, starts languorously covering his body with tanning oil.

JON
snide
You're welcome.

He starts to resume his recording after having his train of thought so rudely interrupted.

JON
Fuck.

LUKE
finished coating his body with oil
What?

JON
My batteries are dead.

Luke laughs, lying back in his lounge chair.

LUKE
Great fuckin' loss.

Jon scowls at Luke, withering in the fading sun.

BLACK (2 seconds)

cut to

cut to

int—MOTEL ROOM—evening

Luke comes in dripping wet from the pool, a towel casually slung over his shoulder. Finds Jon, lying there in his swimtrunks, zonked out on the bed in front of the endlessly babbling TV set.



When

Smiling, he sneaks up on his unconscious prey, stopping to get something from his backpack lying on the floor.

Cautiously, slowly, he peels down Jon's swimsuit. Jon, totally out of it, stirs slightly then settles back to sleep . . .

Luke can't keep from laughing as Jon, feeling a strange sensation on his ass, wakes up.

JON
Hey, what're you . . .

He turns to catch Luke hunched over his backside, grinning mischievously, his trusty Magic Marker in hand.

HIS POV
of his own white butt, the words *TUNNEL OF LOVE* written in fresh black ink.

JON
Shit. You fuckface.

He tosses the pillow at him.

cut to

ext—HUGHES MARKET—night

The fluorescent oasis parking lot outside the glowing supermarket monolith.

Jon and Luke walk toward the car, Jon toting a bagful of dinner groceries as Luke sips on his sports bottle and munches Doritos. His mouth full, he marches goosestep-style, singing the annoying, moronic song from the Nacho Cheese Dorito commercial.

LUKE
Thanks for asking Do-ri-tos, Jumpin Jack Cheese, way to go . . .

JON
Christ, did you take your pill today?

Luke crams a bunch of chips in his mouth like some idiot at a frat-jock party.

JON
Nice.

Approaching the car, they notice a BIZARRELY ATTIRED (like Stephen Sprouse meets the B-52s) COUPLE standing beside the car next to theirs, arguing vociferously.

MAN
You BITCH! You fucking BITCH!!

WOMAN
Shut up! SHUT THE FUCK UP!!

MAN
You fucking WHORE!!!

WOMAN

SHUT THE FUCK UP!!!

Distracted by this odd spectacle (it's on his side of the car), Jon watches the couple noisily bicker as he opens his door.

Meanwhile, a VERY TALL, INTIMIDATING GUY (who oddly resembles EVERETT LEWIS) wearing dark glasses and a seersucker suit comes up to Luke on the other side.

EVERETT
Excuse me.

Luke's instantly on edge, ready to go for his gun in a flash.

Jon in the meantime is transfixed by the arguing couple.

MAN
You fucking SLUTBUCKET WHORE!!!

WOMAN
I said SHUT THE FUCK UP!!!

With this, she begins viciously SLAPPING the man across the face.

The Tall Guy standing by Luke reaches into his coat . . . Luke's ready for a shootout. But instead of a gun, the Tall Guy extracts from his pocket a small business card.

EVERETT
Have you ever heard this phrase?

INSERT CLOSE-UP
on card, which reads:

"Nam yo ho ren ge kyo."

Luke takes one look at the card, and decides to draw his gun anyway, pointing the barrel between the Tall Guy's eyes.

LUKE
Dipshit.

The Tall Guy's jaw drops, he drops the card, and runs off.

Jon's completely oblivious to the drama going on behind his back, he's so absorbed by the altercation between the Couple, which by now has escalated to out-and-out brawling. The Woman is GRUNTING AND PANTING as the Man tightly grips her wrists.

MAN
Go ahead, whore! Just TRY and hit me again, you FILTHY DIRTBALL WHORE!!!

WOMAN
Let me GO, you fucking SLIMY SHITBAG!!!

Suddenly, simultaneously, they become aware of Jon watching them. Together, like choreographed dancers, they turn and face him.

MAN AND WOMAN

start

in unison

What the fuck are you gawking at?

Startled, Jon fumbles for a response.

MAN AND WOMAN
Why don't you mind your own fucking business?

JON
sheepishly
Sorry

He and Luke pile into the car, SLAM the doors.

WOMAN
to the Man
What a creep.

cut to

int—HORRIFYING ART PARTY CHAMBER—night

A GAGGLE OF TRENDY FASHION-HAZARDS playing Twister at one of those unbearable parties where everybody's trying a little too hard to be hip and have fun at the same time.

ATONAL PARTY MUSICK (like EINSTURZENDE NEUBAUTEN or SCRAPPING FOETUS OFF THE WHEEL) clamors in the BG.

TWISTER MASTER
Left foot on yellow.

Darcy sits, bored to death, on the couch, puffing up a Marlboro smokescreen. Peter wanders over, carrying two glasses of frothy nauseating punch.

DARCY
I want to go home.

PETER
We just got here.

DARCY
I don't care. I feel like I'm going to be ill.

TWISTER MASTER o.s.
Right hand on green.

Peter sighs.

PETER
handing a glass to Darcy
Here, I got you some punch.

Darcy takes one look at the gross concoction and makes a disgusted face.

TWISTER MASTER o.s.
OK . . . left hand on red.

Peter's at a loss; he puts Darcy's drink down on the table.

PETER
I don't want to fight, Darcy.

DARCY
I'm not kidding, Peter. If we don't get out of here in about one minute, I'm gonna puke all over the place.

Peter just rolls his eyes.

The contortionistic heap of intertwined bodies goes toppling over like a flailing, squealing alien creature.

Darcy and Peter are just drowning in bad vibes.

cut to

BLACK (4 seconds)

SOUND PULL-UP
The SOUND of a shower running. OS conversation.

LUKE o.s.
Put it inside me.

JON o.s.
What?

cut to

int—MOTEL BATHROOM—night

TIGHT TWOSHOT
Jon and Luke, going at it again (it's like they never do anything else). Jon clinging to Luke in the steamy, soapy shower like a starfish wrapped around an oyster.

LUKE
Put it in.

JON
I don't have a condom.

LUKE
I don't care.

They shift positions slightly under the shower. Luke inhales sharply.

They resume ecstatically grinding against each other, but Luke stops again, repositioning Jon's arm, pressing it against his own throat.

LUKE
Here . . .

JON
puzzled
What do you want me to do?

LUKE
When I start to come, choke me.



come,

JON
pulling away

What?
Come on.

Jon falters . . .

LUKE
impatient
Come on.

Reluctantly at first, Jon resumes his rhythmic pounding, letting his arm tighten around Luke's windpipe . . .

It doesn't take long before they're both having a noisy, monster orgasm underneath the torrential spray of water, which leaves Luke literally gagging, gasping for air.

LUKE
coughing hoarsely
Was that as good for you as it was for me?

Jon weakly leans against the slick tile, laughing.

JON
Would you just shut the fuck up?

cut to

BLACK (6 seconds)

cut to

ext—PICTURE POSTCARD PERFECT SCENE—morning

A farmhouse. Rolling green hills. Windmill.

A tranquil rural snapshot.

Luke drowsily wanders into the frame, stretching the kinks out of his backbone. Unzips his pants and takes his morning piss on the quaint tableau.

SOUND PULLUP
The monotonous DRONE of driving resumes. Abrasive MUSIC. OS voices.

LUKE o.s.
Do you think we've ever met before?

JON o.s.
What, you mean like in another life or something?

LUKE o.s.
Yeah.
JON o.s.
Fuck no.

Luke stuffs himself back in his pants and exits.

LUKE o.s.
Don't you ever wonder what happens after?

DRIVING POV—morning

Emerging from a seemingly endless curving tunnel into the eyeball-scorching light of the Brand New Day.

JON o.s.
After what?

LUKE o.s.
Y'know, after you croak.

JON o.s.
Nope.

LUKE o.s.
I dunno. I like to think it's gonna be better than here. I mean, how could it get any worse?

JON o.s.
There's nothing out there. It's just black cold, nothing.

Luke looks over at him.

JON
The entire concept of an afterlife is just this pathetic notion people cling to in order to avoid confronting their own mortality. I mean, we're just fucking animals, organisms. You think amoebas sit around and wonder what heaven is like?

LUKE
I dunno. I've never asked one.

Luke takes a slurp from his sports bottle.

cut to



int—LOFT IN SPACE—morning

Darcy sits, conspicuously alone in the disheveled bed, raked by rays of morning sunlight. Tensely dragging on her morning cig, she twirls and retwirls a tendril of her unwashed hair around her finger.

On the bedside TV, some INANE EXERCISE SHOW perkily encourages health and fitness via backbreaking calisthenics.

The phone RINGS, obliterating the stasis, and Darcy practically falls out of bed to answer it.

DARCY

62



cut to

me.

Hello? Yes, I'll accept the charges.

ext—PHONEBOOTH—morning

The bitter wind howling across the ruins.

Jon on the line as Luke in the BG is finishing off his morning beer.

JON

Hi, Darce. Sorry to keep calling collect, it's just I don't have the thirty-seven fifty in exact change . . . Well, that's a good question . . . *looking around at the nothingness surrounding them*
Wyoming, maybe? Siberia? Pluto?

DARCY

I've been worried to death about you, you dork. I can't eat, I can't sleep, I'm driving Peter crazy. This is worse than PMS. When're you coming back?

JON

I dunno. Soon, I hope . . .

In the BG, Luke takes down his pants, mooning Jon.

JON

trying to keep from cracking up
Don't worry about me too much, Darce. I know I've made the Biggest Mistake of My Life, but at this point, I'm just trying to take it day by day . . .

DARCY

"Take it day by day?" Have you been brainwashed by Scientologists or something? The whole world is falling apart. Mars must be in Sag . . .

Jon turns his back to Luke, who's now dancing around with his butt exposed.

JON

Darce, I don't know how to describe it really, but it's like nothing seems the same now, everything's changed. The things that used to matter don't anymore. No, I'm not on ecstasy, wench.

Luke dances around into Jon's line of sight again, refusing to be ignored.

JON

unable to keep from cracking up
Look, Darce, I really gotta go. I'll call again in a couple of days. Yeah, 'K. Bye.

He hangs up. Goes chasing after Luke and his bare ass.

cut to

63

BLACK (2 seconds)

(LOW ANGLE) DRIVING POV—day

The hazy nondescript sky outside the passenger-side window. Powerlines playing connect-the-dots between the high-voltage towers.

LUKE o.s.
Hey. Where were you born?

JON o.s.
L.A.

LUKE o.s.
Where in L.A.?

JON o.s.
after a brief, semi-embarrassed pause
Palos Verdes.

LUKE o.s.
laughing
Palos Verdes is *not* L.A.

JON o.s.
It's in the 213 area code.

Jon smiles at Luke, who, reclined across both seats, has his head in his lap.

JON
What about you? Where are you from?

LUKE
Fresno.

JON
Oh, man.

LUKE
Yeah, my sentiments exactly.

The power lines keep drifting by.

ext—THE BOMBED-OUT WILDERNESS—day

CLOSE-UP
The vacuum-sealed POP of the lid being pulled off a can of Hershey's chocolate syrup.

JON o.s.
Y'know, I've been thinking . . .

An erotically charged smile spreads over Luke's face.

LUKE
What?

He looks down at Jon, who lies naked, anticipating, on the ground.



on
the
brink
of
the
gaping,
bottomless
abyss.

JON
We've gotta stop having sex so often.

LUKE
seductively
Oh yeah? Why?

JON
We need to save our strength for burning in
hell for all eternity.

Luke smiles again. And pours a zigzagging trail of chocolate sauce over his lover-prey's finely toned torso (it's black & white; it could just as well be a stream of blood). The sensation of the sticky liquid striking his skin sends shivers up Jon's spine.

Luke then bends to slowly, inexorably, erase the string of chocolate from Jon's warm, tingling flesh with his tongue. Jon closes his eyes and shudders. Working his way up to Jon's neck, his earlobe, Luke pauses, his chocolatey lips just barely separated from Jon's.

JON
I'll never be able to eat a Hershey Bar again
without getting a hard-on.

They laugh. And seal their fates with a passionate, electric kiss.

cut to

BLACK (3 seconds)

cut to

ext—THE PRECIPICE OF THE UNIVERSE—day

Jon and Luke looking out over the edge of the world. Tiny insects perched on the brink of the gaping, bottomless abyss.

LUKE
I ever tell you about the time I saw this bag lady jump off a skyscraper? It was at the corner of Hollywood and Vine during rush hour, and it was just like in the movies. This big crowd gathered around, the cops came, the fire department . . . everyone was all tryin' to talk her down. People who wouldn't give her a nickel if she were on the street begging, but now, suddenly her life became this fuckin' precious thing to them . . .

He takes a drink from his sports bottle of JD.

LUKE
Well, she took the plunge. Landed feet first, bounced back up like ten feet in the air after she hit.

Jon looks at Luke, feeling more than a little queasy.

LUKE

And the *sound* of it, man. I'll never forget it. It was so loud, like this thundercrack. Every bone in her body shattered at once.
shakes his head
Gnarly.

He picks up a stone, hurls it into the vast yawning chasm.

LUKE

Man, I am starved. What's for lunch?

cut to

ext—JETSONS-ESQUE FOODSTOP—day

It stands out in the desolate landscape like some bizarre, anachronistic pop art sculpture.

Jon and Luke emerge, examining their greasy All-American lunches.

JON

Is this one the Super Whaler or the Gut Bomb Burger?

LUKE

taking a loud slurp of his shake
Take a bite and find out.

Jon does.

BACK AT THE CAR

A pink parking ticket decorates the windshield.

JON

his mouth full of burger
I still can't tell the difference.
seeing the ticket
Oh fuck.

cut to

DRIVING POV—day

On their way out of town, whining and dining.

JON o.s.

God, I *hate* fuckin' parking cops. Imagine making a living fucking up other people's days. They are filth. Scum.

LUKE o.s.

Well, it's not like you've gotta pay it out or anything.

JON

in between bites of his burger
Considering the mess we're in already, the last thing I want is my license plate number going

66

I'm-HIV.
positive-
and-
every-
thing's-
hunky-
dory



through any computers . . .

LUKE'S POV

through the passenger window, one of the infamous Parking Gestapo can be seen writing up another hapless expired meter victim.

JON o.s.

I swear if I ever got my hands around the neck of one of those greasy slimeballs, I'd make 'em eat their day's quota, ticket by ticket . . .

BACK TO SCENE

All of a sudden, Luke pulls his gun out and is about to open fire . . .

JON

What the—

He knocks Luke's firing arm before the gun goes off; fries and Diet Coke fly everywhere.

JON

ARE YOU FUCKING CRAZY?

They go speeding off.

cut to

ext—A BIG DIRT PILE—day

So enormous it looks like a weird extraterrestrial landscape out of some sixties SF flick like *Planet of the Giant Ant People*.

The car SCREECHES to a halt and Jon flings his door open, practically off its hinges, and comes flying out.

JON

Are you *trying* to get us both killed. Is that it?

Luke gets out of the car, remorseful, like a guilty JD who's been caught smoking in the boy's room.

JON

flabbergasted, throwing up his hands
I want to go home. I just want to go home, listen to my Smiths CDs and pretend none of this ever happened. Pretend I never met you, that I just kept driving and never let you into the car.

LUKE

So you and Toto can live happily ever after in Kansas?

Jon glares at Luke.

JON

Fuck you.

He starts to march away, but Luke grabs him by the arm.

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JON
Let me GO, motherfucker.

Luke won't. They start to scuffle, and go tumbling down in the dirt. Luke winds up on top, pinning Jon to the ground, their faces inches apart. Jon's eyes blaze as he strains to break free.

LUKE
Listen to me. *Listen to me*, goddamnit.

Luke holds Jon's wrists, forcing him to hear what he has to say.

LUKE
Y'really wanna go back to your "I'm-HIV-positive-and-everything's-hunky-dory" "normal" life, go fuckin' on. Go. Just don't plan anything too far in the future.

Don't you get it? We *aren't* like them. We don't have as much time left, so we've gotta grab life by the balls and go for it. You can piss it all away, working some dumbshit wannabe job till you wither up and they feed you to the worms, but I say fuck that shit.

Jon just stares into Luke's eyes, now sure that he must be losing it as his words are starting to make some kind of twisted sense.

LUKE
I mean, y'keep bangin' your head against the wall and what do you get? A fuckin' bloody head, that's what.

Jon just looks at Luke for a long, long beat . . . All he can do, finally, is let out a weary sigh.

LUKE
I knew you'd see things my way.

He gives Jon a big kiss.

JON
resigned
Just promise me, no more gonzo cowabunga bullshit, alright?

LUKE
grinning, gives him a makeshift handsign—
his middle finger
Scout's honor.

They both smile.

JON
Would you get the fuck off me?

Luke helps him up.

JON
brushing himself off

The
I hear
death is
a lot like
world coming;
the same
chemi-
cals and
is stuff get
released
in the
ours.
blood-
stream.



So where do we go from here?

LUKE
making a grand, sweeping gesture
The world is ours.

JON
Right.

Luke wraps his arms around Jon's shoulder and they head back to the waiting car, the two of them tiny under the big, threatening Cinemascope sky.

cut to

BLACK (3 seconds)

SOUND PULLUP

The omnipresent MURMUR of the car engine.
"Thieves Like Us" by NEW ORDER pulsating on the soundtrack.

cut to

SERIES OF SHOTS

SLO-MO DRIVING POVs out the passenger window of decaying fifties Space Age motels, relics left over from a long-dead era. The images separated by 1-second BLACKOUTS, like sporadic, failing heartbeats.

They've got names like the Sleepy Time, Steele's Motor Lodge, The Rest Stop Inn, and there's something profoundly sad and melancholy about them as the montage progresses from bleached-out daylight to nocturnal pitch blackness.

LUKE o.s.

I swear, the first symptom, the first sign of anything, I'll just off myself straight away. No way am I gonna go through all that horrible stuff you hear about.

JOHN o.s.

I'm sure everybody says that. Only when it comes right down to it, I think every conceivable method is too painful or gruesome . . . like y'know how Ian Curtis died?

LUKE o.s.

The Joy Division guy? Didn't he hang himself?

JON o.s.

Yeah, except instead of just jumping off a chair or something, the story goes he stood on a block of ice, turned the heater on, and waited for it to melt.

LUKE o.s.

No shit. Intense.
Y'know, I hear death is a lot like coming; the same chemicals and stuff get released in the bloodstream.

JON o.s.
All I heard is that you shit your pants.

DRIVING POV – night

Into the heart of darkness.

LUKE o.s.
I mean, you've read about those big, fat senators who drop dead while hosing' some juicy whore? That's how I wanna go, with a bang and a big fuckin' smile on my face.

JON o.s.
Whatever turns you on.

LUKE o.s.
I want you to do it for me.

JON o.s.
Do what?

LUKE o.s.
Duh. Kill me. Put me out of my misery.

Jon just looks at him.

JON
Right.

LUKE
I'm serious, guy. Promise you won't let me down.

Luke's eyes grab hold of Jon's and won't let go.

LUKE
a weird smile coming over his face
Just think of it as dealing me the Ultimate Orgasm.

JON
I wish you wouldn't talk such bullshit.

LUKE
What's the matter? You scared?

JON
I really don't want to talk about it anymore, alright?

Still smiling, Luke sips on his sports bottle. Jon, unnerved, turns his eyes toward the road.

int—BEDROOM—night

cut to

Just
think of
it as
dealing
me the
Ultimate
Orgasm.
Ultimate
dealing
me the
Ultimate
Orgasm.
Just
think of
it as

cut to



The darkened room.

One of Darcy's more frightmarish paintings hanging over the bed.

The OS sound of heavy breathing, grunting, heterosexual sex. Till finally

DARCY o.s.
a tired sigh
Forget it. Can we just forget it?

PETER o.s.
a matching tired sigh
Darcy . . .

Darcy sits up naked in the bed.

DARCY

It's just not gonna happen. So unless you want me to lie here with my legs spread, faking it, let's just give up already, OK?

She clicks on the bedside lamp and starts madly searching through the night-stand drawer.

DARCY
Where are my cigarettes?

PETER o.s.
another sigh
If you would just relax . . .

DARCY
throwing stuff out of the drawer to the floor
I cannot "just relax," I've got too much junk on my mind. Where the fuck are my cigarettes?

She gets out of bed, continues the hunt for nicotine. Peter sits up in the frame, naked and sweaty. He leans back against the headboard.

DARCY
darting in and out of the frame
You know that it's impossible for me to enjoy sex when I'm like this. I don't know why you even instigated it in the first place . . .

Peter closes his tired eyes.

PETER
Maybe it's because we haven't screwed for so long my cock's about to atrophy.

DARCY o.s.
Jerk off then. I do not exist solely to provide periodic relief for the pressure building in your gonads. If I don't find a cigarette in one fucking second, I'm going to have a seizure.

Peter looks up at the ceiling.

PETER

I don't need this, Darcy. I'm trying, I really am. But you're letting a virus in somebody else's bloodstream—

DARCY

Jon is hardly what I would call "somebody else" . . . Eureka!

Her hands shaking like a junkie, she lights up her precious cig. Peter rubs his five o'clock shadowed face with his hands.

PETER

Darcy . . .

DARCY

taking a deep drag

Peter, I'm sorry if I've been a total bitch lately, it's just this thing with Jon has got me all fucked up . . .

PETER

Darcy, I've started seeing someone else.

Darcy chokes on a lungful of smoke.

DARCY

weakly, between coughs
... W-what? . . . ?

Peter folds his arms over his lean, model-ish torso.

PETER

I was gonna say something before but . . .

DARCY

Get out of here.

PETER

Darce . . .

DARCY

I mean it, Peter. I give you two minutes to get dressed, pack your toothbrush and get the fuck out of here.

Peter doesn't say anything. Darcy just stands there glaring at him.

DARCY

fighting tears

You asshole.

She's out the door with a reverberating SLAM. Peter runs his hand through his mussed-up hair. Sighs.

cut to

int—CAR—night

Jon's still at the wheel, enveloped in the stillness, hypnotized by the rumbling

I do not exist solely to

provide periodic relief

for the pressure build-

ing in your gonads.

car engine. Staring ahead at the endless black infinity.

He looks over at Luke, sleeping peacefully, like a little boy in the passenger seat. Curled up with his sports bottle teddy bear.

DRIVING POV

Passing by the iconographic "Blue Skies" sign beckoning by the side of the road. A neon beacon in the hopeless gloom of the night.

Jon looks at Luke again, who stirs a little. Something starts welling up inside him, but he manages to suppress it with a silent smile.

It's one of those weird moments when everything seems clear and meaningful for a flash. It passes.

He keeps driving.

cut to

BLACK (6 seconds)

cut to

ext—THE DREARY HOSTILE MEGALOPOLIS—morning

A grim, foreboding day complete with drizzling rain.

The weary Subaru parked in front of a forlorn 7-Eleven.

INSIDE THE CAR

Jon coughs violently. Looking like hell, feeling worse.

Luke returns, bearing a pair of steaming coffees and one of those little microwavable Campbell's chicken soups. He hands the goods over to Jon, slams shut his door.

JON

in between coughs

Fuck . . . I hate . . . being sick.

He weakly takes a sip of the singeing hot coffee.

LUKE

Here. I got you one of these too.

He gives Jon a mega-vitamin pak.

JON

mustering a smile

Thanks, Mom.

He lets the warm, comforting steam rising off his coffee bathe his face.

LUKE

Y'want another jacket or something?

Jon shakes his head in the midst of another coughing fit. Luke unscrews the lid of his sports bottle, pouring a hit of whiskey into his coffee cup. He goes to pour some into Jon's, too.

**A neon
beacon
in the
hopeless
gloom of
night.**

JON
No thanks . . .

LUKE
insisting
Doctor's orders.
pouring
It beats the hell out of Robitussin.

Jon, coughing again, starts the car.

BLACK (3 seconds)

DRIVING POV—day

The sky is beginning to clear up a bit as they pass over the hill, descending into the Valley of Death.

Funereal POST-PUNK plays over the stereo in the BG.

LUKE o.s.
You want me to drive awhile?

JON o.s.
clearing his throat
I may be sick but I'm not suicidal.

Luke, trying to come up with some way of brightening Jon's mood, has a sudden brainstorm.

LUKE
Hey, did y'ver play that alphabet game with cars on the freeway when you were a kid?

JON
coughs
Y'mean the one where you try and spell out the alphabet with different makes of cars? Yeah, when I was like twelve. Why?

LUKE
Wanna play?

JON
laughing
What?

LUKE
C'mon.

JON
coughing
You're kidding, right?

SERIES OF SHOTS

FREEZEFrames shot from various angles through the windshield. Different brands of cars, alphabetically arranged.

cut to

LUKE o.s.

Audi.

LUKE o.s.

Buick.

LUKE o.s.

Cadillac. Hey, c'mon . . .

LUKE o.s.

Datsun.

JON o.s.

listless, between coughs

El Camino.

LUKE o.s.

Ford.

OK, I'm bored with this game now, too.

cut to

int—LOFT—day

With brooding 4AD-ish MUSIC accentuating her shitty mood, Darcy sits smoking on the tattered couch. She's playing with a RUBBER, BATTERY-OPERATED FISH, which, when she claps her hands, writhes in feeble agony on the cluttered coffee table.

She watches the toy fish gyrate in its mechanical death throes. Claps. It stops. Claps. It starts up again.

She takes the last hit off her last cigarette. Grinds it out in the overflowing ashtray. Crumples the empty pack. She sighs, blows her bangs out of her face.

She claps one more time, stopping the fish's pitiful convulsions. Grabbing her New Order-style trenchcoat, she heads out to buy more smokes.

Not three seconds later, the OS phone RINGS

cut to

ext—PHONEBOOTH OF LAST-DITCH DESPERATION—day

Jon, hacking away, hanging on at a dirty payphone (it reeks of rancid piss).

Over his head, a billboard says

DON'T GIVE UP. PRAY.

JON
Fuck.
more coughing
Come on.

He finally BANGS the receiver down.

JON
yet more coughing

75

Fuck.

ext—ANYTIME TELLER IN THE BARREN PLAIN—day

They need money, bad.

Luke gets the magic bank card from Jon, who's coughing his guts out.

LUKE

Be back in a sec.

He gives Jon a husbandly peck on the cheek and runs toward the trustworthy cash machine. Jon feels too crummy to do much but sit there and cough a couple times.

Luke returns momentarily, however, enraged and empty-handed.

LUKE

It's out of order.

Jon closes his eyes, rubs his feverish brow.

JON

Shit.

Luke stands there livid, his breath forming furious clouds in the cold air. Suddenly, he leans in, grabbing his gun from the glove compartment. Jon tries to stop him, and they wrestle for the gun. But Luke pulls away and runs off to wreak his vengeance on the uncooperative teller-machine. BLASTING THE HELL out of it OS.

LUKE o.s.
Fuck you fuck you FUCK YOU!!!

He returns out of breath, dives into the backseat. Jon, coughing, glares at him.

JON

Godfucking damn it.

They PEEL OFF down the street.

BLACK (1 second)

cut to

DRIVING POV (REAR WINDOW) – day

The long and winding road stretching out forever behind them.

JON o.s.
his anger only making his cough worse
You motherfucking *idiot!* How can you be so
more hacking
... fucking STUPID?

Clutching his gun with still-trembling hands, Luke is staring out the back window.

PUT THAT MOTHER FUCKING THING AWAY

LUKE
finally, a barely audible mumble

Sorry.

JON
You're sorry. Well, that's just . . .
coughing
. . . swell.

LUKE
a weird intensity in his voice
I said I'm sorry and I mean it. What do you
fuckin' want from me??

Jon looks back at Luke. Sighs wearily.

JON

I'm tired of this.

Luke sits there bouncing the gun up and down in his lap.

JON
coughing

I'm tired of getting off ten times a day, feeling
exhausted and drained all the time. Y'know,
sometimes I get this image of you in my head
as this vampire, sucking the life out of me. And
I find that really scary.

Luke turns toward JON, suddenly pointing the gun to his own forehead.

LUKE
Well, *here*. Pull the fuckin' trigger then. Will that
make you happy?

JON
not in the mood for melodrama
Put that thing away.

LUKE

No, dude, c'mon. Pull the trigger. I deserve it,
right?

JON

Put. That. Thing. away.

LUKE

No, c'mon.
reaching for Jon's hand
Kill me.

JON
PUT THAT MOTHERFUCKING THING
AWAY!!!

He swerves off the road, tires SCREAMING.

Jon cuts the ignition and the two of them sit there a moment in the vibrating
quiet. Jon hyperventilating, gripping the steering wheel white-knuckled. Finally,

Luke lowers the gun, holding it in his lap, gazing down at it. He starts quietly laughing.

Jon just sighs, convinced they've both gone mad.

JON
coughing
I'm going for a walk.

He gets out of the car and exits with a SLAM, leaving Luke there alone in the backseat, pounding the flat length of the gun barrel to his forehead.

ext—THE ABANDONED RAILROAD YARD—day

It's like the Sahara Desert of Lost Hope, crisscrossed with decaying railroad tracks and littered with carcasses of old trains.

Balancing on a rusted rail, Jon wanders through the emptiness. Coughs.

He bends to pick up a rock.
Throws it into the lonely distance.

Coughs again.
Keeps walking.

cut to

ext—BACK AT THE CAR

Leaning against the fender, Luke finishes up the last of his sports bottle of Jack Daniel's with a loud SLURP. Twirls the pistol on his trigger finger.

Goes back into the glove compartment to refill his drink container. Finds the bottle, with nothing but amber residue at the bottom.

LUKE

Shit.

He tosses the empty bottle to the ground. It makes a tinny SHATTERING sound.

LUKE

Shit, shit, shit, shit, shit, shit. Shit.

He looks down at the broken glass, the jagged shards glistening in the dirt.

cut to

int—LOFT—afternoon

The same empty frame that Darcy had earlier vacated.

The phone begins RINGING again, resounding in the stillness. Once. Twice. Three times . . .

Then there's the anxious OS SOUND of keys in the lock.

DARCY o.s.
Oh shit . . .

The phone RINGS a fourth time.



I love you
more than
life. I love
you more
than life.
I love you
more than
life. I love
you more
than life.
I love you
more than
life. I love
you more
than life.
I love you
more than
life. I love
you more
than life.
I love you
more than
life. I love
you more
than life.

There's the OS SOUND of the door finally opening, frantic fumbling. The LOUD CRASH of something being knocked over.

DARCY o.s.
GoddamnmotherfuckSHIT.

Darcy falls face-first into the frame like some Jerry Lewis movie, crawling on her belly toward the phone, which RINGS a fifth time. She rolls like a stunt woman to snatch up the receiver in the middle of the sixth RING.

DARCY
practically strangling herself with
the phone cord
Hello? Hello? HELLO???

Too late. No one's on the other end.

cut to

ext—LAST RESORT PHONEBOOTH—afternoon.

Jon hangs up. Bummed.

Sighing, he leans his head up against the streaked filthy glass. He coughs. Starts to cry.

cut to

int—LOFT

Darcy, left holding the receiver, listening to the BUZZING dial tone.

She calmly, almost *too* calmly, hangs up the phone.
Sits here a moment, concentrating on controlling her breathing. In. Out. In. Out.

Then

DARCY
the dam bursting wide open
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!!!

She goes absolutely *berserk*, destroying everything in sight. Throwing stuff around, capsizing furniture, she just totally loses it.

She's got a MANNEQUIN HEAD in her hands and is about to hurl it across the room when

The phone RINGS again.

She trips over the coffeetable to get it.

DARCY
totally out of breath
Hello? Yes, YES, I'll accept the charges for
fucking Christ's sake! . . . Jon? Jon, is that
you?

back to

ext—PHONEBOOTH

Jon, his face brightening.

JON
Yeah, Darce . . .
a big smile of relief
I'm coming home.

BLACK (3 seconds)

ext—THE CAR—day

Jon returns.
Finding the car deserted, Luke nowhere in sight.
He coughs.

JON
Luke?

He looks inside the streaked, bug-spattered windows. No sign of Luke.

Walking around to the passenger side, he finds Luke splayed out against the dented wheel well. Playing with something in his hands.

JON
another cough
What're you doing?

A long, dramatized pause. Luke is drunk out of his head.

LUKE
not looking up
Hey, dude.

Jon sighs, fed up. Then he sees

the stream of blood trickling from Luke's wrist, the red dripping piece of glass in his unsteady hand.

JON
Jesus.

Luke holds his arm up, displaying the rivulet of bright crimson flowing down the length of his forearm.

LUKE
*staring, transfixed by the sight
of his own blood*
It's living inside me, but I can't see it. Can you?
This just looks like regular boring ol' blood
to me.

Jon turns away, disgusted.

cut to



It's living inside me

LUKE

What's the matter? Haven't you ever seen anyone bleed before?

Jon spins around and punches Luke hard across the jaw. Grabs the shard of glass from him and hurls it away. Luke is totally passive, doesn't even put up a struggle. He starts up his strange laughing again.

JON
What the fuck is wrong with you?

Luke just sits there propped up like some anthropomorphic dummy, chuckling to himself like he's privy to some sick black joke.

Why do you pull shit like this?

Luke's weird laughter gradually dissipates.

LUKE
a darkness suddenly falling over his face
I don't know.

Jon sighs.
Wearily, he removes his T-shirt, bends down to wrap it around Luke's bleeding wrist.

JON
I think our "relationship" has reached critical mass here.

He makes a tight knot in the makeshift bandage. Luke says nothing.

JON
Our Holiday In The Sun is over. We've taken this hackneyed romantic fantasy just about to the limit.

Luke looks up at Jon, his eyes like deep black holes.

LUKE
What d'you mean?

Jon doesn't say anything. Just coughs a few times.

LUKE
I'm not going back.

Jon sighs wearily.

JON
Well, send me a postcard. This is where I get off.

He straightens up. Luke starts laughing again.

JON
So what're you gonna do? Just sit here?

Luke keeps on laughing.

Jon just watches him for a long beat . . . After all that's happened, after all they've been through, he's at a loss for words.

JON

. . . happy trails.

He sadly turns to go.
And hears behind him the ominous CLICK of a trigger being cocked.

Slowly, he turns back around . . . finds Luke, his expression suddenly dead serious, pointing the gun right at him.

Jon just looks at the pistol and at Luke, who cautiously gets up.

JON

tired

What d'you think you're doing?

LUKE

suddenly very emotional

You will never, ever, find anybody who cares about you as much as I do. Don't you realize that?

Jon sighs.

JON

Luke, don't be stupid . . .

Luke says nothing, his stare becoming steely.

JON

sick of the game

You'd never have the balls, so why don't you just-

Without warning, Luke fires off a shot, intentionally missing Jon by a mile but making his heart stop.

JON

You fucker.

In a flash, he tackles Luke and they wrestle in the dirt, tearing at each other's clothes in a physical struggle not unlike sex.

LUKE

Mellow out, man! Mellow out! MELLOW OUT!!!

Finally extricating himself, he presses the gun into Jon's forehead.

LUKE

Mellow. Out.

Jon stares into the barrel of the gun and into Luke's unwavering eyes.

JON

Go ahead. Blow my fucking brains out. Go ahead, motherfucker!

Luke's finger inexorably tightens on the trigger . . . but he just can't do it. Jon



laughs crazily and starts coughing; Luke swipes him on the side of the head with the butt of the pistol, knocking him out.

Out of breath, Luke looks down at Jon: a curl of blood gathers at the side of his face like a lock of untamed hair. He bends over, and tenderly, sensuously licks it up.

And drags Jon's inert body toward the car.

cut to

BLACK (3 seconds)

cut to

ext—THE SHORE—dusk

Jon's trashed car parked by the side of the highway.
A nearby sign pronounces DEAD END.

The foreboding, bass-heavy RUMBLE of the roaring ocean overwhelming all other sounds.

ON THE BEACH

It's stark, deserted, straight-out-of-*The Seventh Seal* desolate. Beneath the vast gunmetal gray sky, Jon and Luke are like fleas on the sandy horizon line.

CLOSE-UP

Jon, slowly, inexorably comes to, consciousness flickering in his dazed eyes.

As he wakes, he starts coughing. His head hurts. He goes to touch his aching temple but finds his arms tied behind his back, bound with his T-shirt, which is caked with Luke's dried blood.

He's fuzzily aware of his shoes being yanked off. One. The other . . .
He sees Luke kneeling on the chilly sand, gun tucked under his armpit, pulling his socks off.

JON
grogged out, his skull pounding
what . . .
coughing more

Luke is blitzed out of his fucking mind. As Jon vainly tries to orient himself, Luke reaches over, unbuttoning the fly of his pants.

JON
. . . what the fuck . . . ?

He starts to struggle, kicking up sand. Luke easily overpowers him, pinning him by the shoulders to the ground, his grip leaving indents in his flesh.

LUKE
his eyes burning holes into Jon's
Can't you see? I love you more than life.

JON
You're crazy.

LUKE

I don't care about anything anymore.

They stare into each other's electrified gaze, and Jon just stops fighting back altogether. He doesn't care anymore either.

In terrible acquiescent silence, Jon lets Luke rip down his pants and lifts his legs up onto his shoulders. Then, undoing his own fly, Luke raises the gun, gratefully accepting the metal shaft between his lips.

Jon shuts his eyes tight with horrified revulsion, and has to strain to keep from making any sound as Luke violates him.

Gradually increasing his rhythmic thrusting, Luke inevitably surrenders himself to the physical pleasure surging through his body. He pushes the hard, spit-covered gun barrel deeper down his own throat.

Opening his red, watery eyes, Jon stares into Luke's contorted face with seething mixture of fear, rage and pure hatred. They're both breathing hard, like long-distance runners pushed beyond the limit of endurance.

Finally, Jon can't bear it any longer. He just wants the Nightmare to end, to reach its bloody, horrific conclusion.

JON

Do it.

What are you fucking waiting for?

Do it.

DO IT!

Luke shuts his eyes tight.

His finger tremblingly closes in on the trigger.

His rapid thrusting becomes more urgent.

He is so close . . .

Jon just stares at Luke's sweat-covered face, which looks like that of a madman possessed.

As their fucking grows more and more intense and violent, the CAMERA moves in closer and closer:

Jon's legs straining against Luke's heaving torso.
Their bodies muscularly wedged together.

Luke's ecstatic agony.

Jon's steely determination.

The gun wet with saliva dripping.

The pain in Jon's eyes.

The panic in Luke's.

He's so close . . .

Finally, he's there. He pulls the trigger.
An empty CLICK.

The unbearable tension instantly evaporates like a mirage.

Breaking down crying now, Luke slowly removes the pistol from his mouth and hurls it into the sea. Jon turns away, exhales, his whole body deflating like a balloon.

They uncouple, separate, unable to look at each other.



Neither of them moves for a long time.
Luke quietly sobbing. Jon just sitting there.

Finally, Luke reaches over and undoes the knotted T-shirt, which is cutting off the circulation in Jon's arms.

Jon looks at Luke.

Without a word, he pulls his pants back up.
Looks at Luke again.

Then belts him hard across the face. Gets up and leaves.

Totally shell-shocked, Luke picks himself up and watches Jon disappear into the OS distance.

He sighs.
Sits there on the sand facing the Blue Blue Ocean.

He doesn't move for

a

very

long

time.

An eternity later, Jon appears again, slowly reentering the frame.

Luke turns to face him. And they look at one another. Neither has anything to say.

Finally, Jon sits down on the sand. An arm's length away.

And they just sit there. Numb, blank, completely exhausted.
Not touching. Not speaking.

For

another

very

long



time.

Then, finally
they both tentatively reach out . . .

Join hands.

And they're left, sitting there.

Staring at the sea.

With the dreadful, terrifying Future spanning out mercilessly before them.

cut to

BLACK (6 seconds)



and the screen goes

UNIL STEVEN gets up and walks over to the monitor. Shuts it off with a final click

And they just keep sitting there . . .

MICHELE gently places her hand on her girlfriend's knee.

PATRICIA rambling, lights a cigarette.

DETIECIA stares.

TOMMY quietly clears his throat.

AND SIT THERE.

THEY JUST SIT THERE.

NO ONE CRIES.

NO ONE CRIES.

NOT ONE OF THEM CAN UTER A WORD.

THEIR FACES ARE TOTALLY IMPASSIVE, HOLLOW-EYED, NUMB.

TOMMY ARRANGED IN A BROKEN SEMI-CIRCLE AROUND THE GLOWING TV MONITOR, WHICH

AN INEXORABLE PAN ACROSS THE FIVE OF THEM—STEVEN, MICHELE, PATRICIA, DETIECIA,

IN—STEVEN'S ROOM—DAY

TILL FINALLY, HIS IMAGE EVAPORATES INTO OBLIVIOUS VIDEOSCREEN.

WHAT FEELS LIKE AN UNBearable LENGTH OF TIME . . .

HIS QUESTIONS LIKE SHINING INFINITELY DARK STARS, GAZE INTO THE LENS FOR

ABOUT, NIGHT?